

From: WRowan [REDACTED]

Date: Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 9:51 AM

To: Adrian Haro [REDACTED], [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER] , [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER]

Cc: [REDACTED - TWL ADVISOR], [REDACTED - TWL DIRECTOR]

Subject: Follow up to Thursday meetings: Response to TWL cash crunch

Oct. 11, 2023

[REDACTED - TWL STAFFER],

This e-mail is to follow up the last two of our Thursday's scheduled meetings [9/26 and 10/5]. It is clear decisions need to be made fast, and that we disagree about how to tackle the latest challenge. I will lay out the position from our end to speed things up.

The issue is a likelihood The Workers Lab (TWL) will not have funds to meet its scheduled disbursements to us and Pacific Gateway over the next couple of months. You expect a brighter outlook by December. You have said I should look at how we could cut costs at this end but asserted that TWL cannot reduce its establishment costs because "*those are separate line items*". Adrian, TWL's CEO, put it more bluntly in last Thursday's meeting in your absence, telling me your finance team are working out what funds are available from reserves to cover TWL's ongoing costs next month; then they will see "*what's spare*" (for us).

As I said at both sessions, I hold the obvious counterview. It is unfortunate philanthropy won't fund TWL to the level of spending to which it has become accustomed. But existing funds came from donors expecting results. This liquidity crisis forces a choice on where the best outcomes for low-income workers now lie; TWL's spending on lawyers, consultants, paid partnerships, management, travel, and so on; or a low-cost project that is steadily, uniquely, proving America's public agencies, and their billions of dollars for employment development, will align behind tens of millions of non-standard work-seekers? I believe that is a more important criteria for decisions than TWL's accounting conventions or finance processes.

It is important we address this swiftly. At the beginning of September [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], running an operation serving hundreds of workers in Long Beach, had formal termination-of-employment letters issued because TWL had told Pacific Gateway scheduled disbursements would stop at the end of September. We are all currently operating in a kind of limbo. Also, it seems increasingly likely our problems are going to reach a wider audience. We need to start jointly planning how to minimize impact on innocent parties.

Whichever direction we're going in now, it is likely the pace of events will be determined from this end. Because of the complexities of our operation, the lead-times involved, and our multiple responsibilities, we don't have the luxury of waiting for decisions to emerge (TWL have declined to provide any deadlines for updates about the next disbursement). We have to plan and execute on the basis of worst-case scenarios absent any other confirmed

datapoints. This email will identify what we see as the core issues and share our planning. That should get us to greater clarity, and maybe even understanding.

We can't discuss this situation without referencing behavior by TWL's CEO during this project and TWL's response to evidence of that. (I imagine this is difficult for you as Adrian's friend; to spare you any conflict-of-loyalty agonies, I have cc'd this email to the two TWL [REDACTED - CONTACTS] email addresses I think I know, in addition to our usual Thursday attendees.) I sense a belief at TWL that his behavior was in the past, and we should move on. That does not banish its impact. **Your view that we - not TWL - should absorb consequences of the behavior is a sticking point between us.**

There is repetition from previous emails in what follows. **I spent much of 2022 trying to warn TWL of the consequences of increasingly unprofessional behavior by its CEO and the accumulating consequences, then months in 2023 seeking to show that a united focus on delivery, not TWL's one-sided lawyers, was the way to get back on the rails in the aftermath.** I am again trying to alert TWL to the likely impact of what seem to be unquestioned assumptions in your collective thinking. I don't expect to be heeded, so this email is also designed to serve as a 10-point primer for the multiple organizations and individuals who could soon need to be bought up to speed on bewildering events within TWL.

OUR CURRENT SITUATION

1) Background to our Thinking at this End

I want to continue recognizing the good points about our partnership. TWL's brand has opened many doors for us during this project. Your personal contacts and credibility have been a welcome accelerant in the [REDACTED] launch. [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER]'s project management and administrative skills have smoothed the operation at some key stages.

The fact two more regions have provided funding for launch of our labor platform during this project may seem a significant step. However, anyone following our work knows I had developed strong relationships with multiple stakeholders over several periods of work with public agencies and their stakeholders in both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. This was before TWL had heard of us. From that perspective we haven't achieved much.

We should acknowledge where this program could have been after 18 months working together. September's [REDACTED - FEDERAL GOVERNMENT] meeting - brokered through Adrian's connections - shows exactly what is possible on the occasions when TWL decide to add value to a grantee's work. (I know the meeting was set up to examine "*all the great*

things TWL is doing" in Adrian's description, but I was reasonably confident this project would become the focus.) Interest in us around [REDACTED] is now rejuvenated and they have strongly suggested to [REDACTED] that, if we can add a red state to the portfolio, some substantial funding for the technology could be released. Fortuitously, I also cultivated [REDACTED - STATE] pre-Covid and that launch is now added to my priorities.

Search my agendas and emails to Adrian over the last 18 months for "umbrella". You will see how consistently I suggested TWL reach out to National Governors' Association, National Association of State Workforce Agencies, and a list of other national umbrella bodies focused on healthy labor markets. Some of them connected me to opportunities a few years ago. All of them have leverage, credibility, networks, and access to resources but would be first to admit edgy innovation is not a core competency.

As the agendas/emails show, I believe TWL could have positioned itself as a thought partner and outsourced innovation agency for at least one of these groups. You could have used our Good Gig Work project as a way in, requesting they propagate us to members, while building a relationship that would outlast this project. I am convinced if some entrepreneurial drive had been applied to this, utilizing TWL's union links and broad remit as part of the package, and given the turbulence of post-Covid workforces, this project would now have 5-8 regions funding launch. That would have attracted interest from a range of funders to both us and TWL's wider potential.

TWL is far better placed to build these kind of relationships than us. All it would have taken for the wide-momentum scenario above, was an attitude to this partnership from TWL of "*How do we help? What can we learn?*". Instead, our relationship has gone through four phases: (a) aggressive belittling (b) a response to that behavior blatantly focused on protecting TWL from the perceived consequences (c) TWL starting its own launch in Chicago, competing with our launches for sparse resources, and now (d) a determination that if funders won't support TWL as it would like, that is unfortunate for this project but nothing to do with TWL. Adrian made that explicit in his "*You are just a vendor to TWL, it's for you to solve problems*" articulation in an earlier September meeting.

We are at odds on this. I believe TWL needs to take responsibility for lack of funding. That's not an academic issue, your continued resolve not to do so will have consequences that could go wider than any of us can understand at this point.

2) How we Reached this Point

There seems to be a sanitized version of events in our project that has gained traction within TWL. Coupled with your CEO's misstatements and memory lapses, documented elsewhere, we are in danger of having two sets of facts. But the narrative is unusually well evidenced.

The key events are broadly:

1. Before joining up with TWL we had completed a pandemic pilot with city of Long Beach, funded by [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] foundations. Long Beach conducted a public inquiry into the pilot, as a result of which they committed \$250,000 to expand our operation across the region's economy.
2. We signed for an expansion project (which TWL calls a "Design Sprint") with TWL in March 2022. The contract had an explicit end date of June 2022 and has not been updated.
3. In a March 2022 [announcement](#) TWL unambiguously committed \$1,000,000 to expanding our program. As of this writing, a little over \$[REDACTED] has been released, with commitments to pay a further \$[REDACTED] or so.

The Financial Dependency issue

4. From early into our relationship, your CEO started urging me to "*leave the financing to me*". By which he meant I should focus on implementation, not ongoing outreach to philanthropies. This made sense; TWA's brand and full-time fundraiser was far better equipped for the job, I had more than enough work pulling launches together.
5. As it became clear that TWA's work style was very different from ours, I became more worried about this reliance. In particular, the CEO's constant urging that I "*slow down*" to his pace rather than trying to push ahead and build momentum, was at odds with our view that the post pandemic moment should be seized.
 1. By about mid 2022 I was so concerned about our reliance on TWL that I determined that we had to resume fundraising. Both parties accepted this needed to be collaborative. I asked TWL that we do joint approaches to funders. This was tentatively agreed to, then rescinded by the CEO because, as he told me on multiple occasions, he believed "*your messaging is crap*".
 2. His solution to this perceived problem: TWL's messaging consultant - who I understand is a former business partner of his - would build a slide deck that we would have to use to explain our project.
 3. Assuming that would be a quick process, and everyone would eventually realize the folly of somebody who knew next to nothing of our program dictating how we talked about it, I acquiesced.
 4. The process took several months. Even the CEO was forced to agree that the slide deck eventually produced was not fit for purpose. His solution to that embarrassment: TWL's consultant had to be given more time to go away and do it again. That dragged on for even more months.
 5. As an insight into the opportunity that was catastrophically missed by this refusal to simply open doors so we could explain our own project, we can look at the one case where we did make a collaborative approach to a funder. I introduced your CEO to our Program Manager at [REDACTED] Foundation who had funded us on three separate occasions. He then spent

several months working internally to achieve a \$500K investment in TWL last winter, including this Design Sprint.

6. We should not be surprised by [REDACTED]'s commitment; a combination of our deep specialist subject matter expertise and implementation track record, coupled with TWL's broader agenda and mission, offers a strong proposition to foundations.
7. As a further example of the above point, partners in [REDACTED] introduced us to [REDACTED - FUNDER]. I involved TWL in early conversations with their regional CEO but TWL dropped out of subsequent meetings, presumably as a result of disorganization (it is prone to happening at TWL). Three weeks ago, after sharing my messaging with partners, [REDACTED] confirmed a minimum \$[REDACTED] investment in our [REDACTED] launch over 4 years, subject to due diligence.
8. I have always introduced anyone who works with us to others I have cultivated. One more random example: A [book](#) about "How to Build a Just Economy" coming out internationally in January from Hachette, one of the world's biggest publishers, contains a quote from Adrian and favorable explanation of TWL. That is a direct result of my unthinking introduction between him and the author. Your CEO's weaponizing of what could have been mutually beneficial reciprocity of introductions such as this likely cost us a lot of funding.
9. TWL remains our almost only source of income. As you and Adrian know, last Spring I had to decide between driving our launches or building collateral and starting approaches to funders. The latter would have been counterproductive, funders want to see successful launches and I would be abandoning those to fundraise. To avoid this Catch 22, I gambled on TWL keeping us going at the current minimal level until around April 2024. As with other misjudgements I made about TWL, I defend the call. Sums squandered on your lawyers for example could probably have funded our Long Beach operations for a year. I underestimated TWL's capacity to misspend.

Unprofessional behavior within TWL

6. In parallel to enforced financial dependency, there was escalating erratic behaviour by the CEO including:
 1. Attempting to instigate a policy that I as a white person not go to meetings without being chaperoned by a person of color. His explanation for this, varied between I remind attendees of slavery, and with my British accent I remind people of colonialism.
 2. Repeated statements intended to undermine me such as: "*Everyone in philanthropy told me to avoid you*". Under questioning this was revised to "*Most people in philanthropy told me to avoid you*". Neither statement has

ever been evidenced despite repeated requests for details, even if anonymized.

3. Thoughtful attempts by me to suggest ways TWL might be better organized, more collaborative, or work more efficiently for mutual advantage, were treated as hostile attacks provoking angry pile ons.
4. On multiple occasions the CEO flew into rages in which he threatened to pull the plug on their financial support to us, with no hint of due process, sometimes immediately. Groveling emails were demanded as the price of deflating this rage.

A formal complaint

7. In March 2023, I filed a formal complaint about this behavior and the destructiveness caused, with an accompanying e-mail, to TWL. I made clear:
 1. Any legal threat from the complaint to TWL was negligible. Action for workplace harassment by a non-employee rests on proving financial dependency of the individual on the offending organization. I work unpaid, so have no standing to make such a claim.
 2. I was interested only in recovery from the behavior: making sure it stopped and TWL worked with us to make up all the wasted opportunity and mis-spent time. I expected someone internally to direct the CEO to behave and that we would quickly come up with a plan to recover lost momentum.
8. Instead, I received a letter from a boutique Chicago law firm stating that they had been retained by TWL to investigate my complaint, the only alternative being some form of joint mediation, which my penniless organization would have to co-fund. Your lawyers' work compounded this project's problems. (See next section.)

Current status

9. From around early 2023, TWL has been funding the new America think tank to launch our platform in Chicago. This was funded in preference to our ongoing work in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] which we funded ourselves at this end at a crucial point last winter.
10. At end of August 2023 TWL's CEO informed us and Pacific Gateway that a cash crunch was coming. Costs of the Design Sprint were unlikely to be met from October onwards. He insisted I was just "A vendor" and it was my problem to resolve. Thankfully, you appear to have now taken over managing TWL's finances. However, we are now working towards assumed wind down of the platform and project in November.

3) TWL's Response to my Complaint

Many organizations have a complaint filed about a misbehaving manager, realize their guardrails were weak, resolve the issues to the complainant's satisfaction, and move on. That is what I expected after filing my complaint last March. It, and the accompanying email, explicitly stated I needed the behavior to stop and TWL to conclusively get behind our project delivery, facilitate fundraising, and it could all be laid to rest in a couple of weeks. Instead, TWL spent enormous sums making their situation, and therefore our project, weaker.

A core issue is misuse of lawyers:

1. At the end of your lawyers' investigation of the complaint it became clear their terms of reference had been not *"Is there behaviour at TWL that should be stopped?"* as I assumed but *"Is there a legal risk from this alleged behaviour to TWL or its CEO?"* [See my e-mail exchanges with [REDACTED], lawyer, May 17, 2023]
2. In the letter announcing their role as arbiter of my complaint, the lawyers went on to say that they considered my suggestion that TWL regroup itself around making up for lost momentum on this project as potential extortion, for which they might instigate legal action against me. This opening salvo in their "investigation" was never retracted.
3. Your lawyers' final analysis ignored or downplayed the evidence offered. It is illegal to record meetings or calls in California to collect evidence; the highest standard of proof a complainant can realistically produce is emails describing statements or events sent to the other parties involved which are then not denied, recontextualized, or walked back. I systematically, contemporaneously, sent such emails detailing what had happened to your CEO and others who witnessed his behavior and statements. Even in the limited emails that your lawyers examined, that standard of evidence was regarded as inconclusive if the CEO had a different memory of events when interviewed by his lawyer months later. [See email exchange above.]
4. While engaged in their investigation, the same lawyers were put in the driving seat of the relationship between TWL and us. An attorney attended our regular meetings, often insisting on working through lawyerly statements about what I should do. (As one microcosmic insight into TWL's priorities I recall a lengthy, clearly drafted in advance, lecture from a lawyer about how short of money TWL was.)
5. My emails about funding deadlines, resources, and so on to the CEO were forwarded to a lawyer. It was clear these lawyers had negligible experience of the world of low budget nonprofits. As one example I can share an e-mail from them which contains clearly contradictory points within just a few sentences about a crucial continuation of funding. When asked for clarity they refused to provide it, insisting that the mutually exclusive statements were not contradictory.

6. I have anecdotal information about what TWL pays these lawyers per hour. It was gleaned in a period when I was contractually bound to respect TWL's commercial confidentiality so cannot be revealed. But the firm, [PFS](#), is not noted in the public realm as being cheap.
7. A lawyer stopped attending our weekly meetings in around June 2023. But they clearly remained key to TWL's operation. Throughout summer your CEO has referred to "*My legal team*" who he was clearly relying on to make or approve decisions.

To assess TWL's response it's worth comparison with how Silicon Valley Community Foundation dealt with a comparable [complaint of bullying](#) there in 2018. SVCF is bigger than TWL, but TWL is an [REDACTED] offshoot so it has similar significance as a standard setter.

Staff at SVCF reported a middle manager as inappropriately aggressive and demanding. The resulting investigation, by lawyers and the media, resolved everything eventually, representing a standard to which nonprofits able to afford copious legal hours could reasonably be expected to aspire.

Some key differences between TWL's case and that of SVCF:

1. SVCF's CEO was accused only of turning a blind eye to the bad behavior, TWL's CEO led it.
2. SVCF's bullying was of the "*you all need to work much harder*" variety. Unjustified, but at least mission-aligned. TWL's was utterly pointless.
3. The misbehaving executive at SVCF was widely admitted to be high performing and effective in every respect apart from the bullying.
4. SVCF [fired a first group of lawyers](#) investigating the behavior, worried the firm might be perceived to be biased in favor of management. TWL's lawyers made explicit their priority was protecting management after announcing they were the only realistic option for any investigation.
5. When an exhaustive investigation was completed by the second, demonstrably neutral, lawyers SVCF [published it openly](#). At TWL even the complainant (me) has not been allowed to see the report submitted to the board in response to my complaint. I was offered a verbal debrief by the lawyer, which I had to write up because he declined to even summarise in an email. The debrief revealed their ignorance, or dismissal, of key evidence. I believe it could defame me.

Your lawyers' report might have created a sense of relief around TWL. If so, that was misplaced. The careless, costly, response has created a situation that is far worse for TWL than any version of just biting the bullet and resolving some internal failings. More on that in a moment.

Given the caliber of TWL's board, it seems inexplicable that you have all collectively allowed your situation to become so dire. There is a clue to how it might have happened buried in the SVCF final report:

"Systems were not in place to ensure the Board received full and accurate information, including having direct access to non-leadership staff. Instead, Board communications typically were filtered through SVCF leaders, including the former CEO, who tightly controlled the information provided to the Board. As a result, the Board did not know the full nature and extent of the workplace misconduct at SVCF." (Bottom of [page 5](#)).

It's just a hunch, but I suspect your board was assured that my complaint lacked substance. Was Adrian then allowed to shape the terms of reference for an investigation into his behavior? And is TWL's board refusing to talk with me another manifestation of the same perception? This cloak-and-dagger approach to investigating leadership wrongdoing seems incredible post-Weinstein.

Google recent investigations into management misbehavior in organizations of TWL's size and you will generally find transparency, accountability, and rigor. A recent example to surface is at the dishonestly anti-liberal "think tank" Project Veritas, recently headlined for buying stolen Biden family documents. They fired their CEO over staff allegations of financial abuses and creating a "volatile" workplace, then [released their lawyers' audit](#) to the Washington Post to demonstrate due process was followed.

Yes, even law-breaking right-wing conspiracy shops hold themselves to higher standards of accountability than TWL! I suspect you may have the problem identified in SVCF's investigation above, but you have it after your investigation. Your directors may not understand the scale of problems that have built up in the organization.

4) Our position on the cash crunch

We don't see the financing issue as a problem to be shared equally. TWL has been hosing cash we at least helped to raise for months. Adrian re-iterated on Thursday last week (10/5) that you have are still waiting for a Yes or No on short term funding from [[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Foundation. He said he "feels good" about the situation and appears to expect us to draw comfort from that. He has been unable to provide any deadline by which decisions will be made or communicated.

We have to operate to a timetable of tripwires. If there is no funding for Pacific Gateway coming, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] have to again be issued with termination letters a month ahead. If our scheduled disbursements aren't going to happen this month, we need to plan mothballing of the code and communications to users now.

To give us some foundations in these shifting sands, we have three foundational principles to use for navigating the uncertainty:

a) We have enormous responsibility to stakeholders who enabled our work to get this far. Protecting their interests, data, reputations, and investment is paramount.

TWL is of course one of those stakeholders. My sense of responsibility to you is one reason I continue trying to alert you to the problems accruing for you around this project.

b) We also have a tangible responsibility to the concept we have pioneered and are rapidly beginning to prove.

This project has shown public agencies will start systematically supporting the 35% of America's adults in non-standard employment, although sadly this has not been shown on the scale possible. We also know private employers and CBO's will align with a platform structured around worker support and progression. Capturing then replicating the learning behind this is now a strong proposition for funders.

We delivered this despite a barrage of destabilizing behavior from an organization universally believed to be supporting us. That demonstrates the strength of our preparations, resilience, and ability to build relationships; all of which could be expanded with better resources and more mature partners.

Turning this into concrete outcomes for as many low wage work-seekers as possible is our overarching priority going forward.

c) It is not my job to protect TWL, or anyone else, from the consequences of Adrian's reign of error at TWL. I don't have bandwidth or resources for the task.

I have carved out time to write this because it is clear to me, with my background, how badly TWL's apparent insouciance about their CEO's behavior could damage innocent organizations and people. I fear you are relying on your lawyers' guidance, and they have already shown they don't understand the direction in which this is now heading.

These principles are not opening positions for negotiation. They are bedrock, allowing you to predict our next steps even as we struggle to understand yours.

5) Our potential for cost cutting

We are already pared to the bone at this end. Our technology is necessarily sophisticated and dependent on over 20 open-source underlying systems, each of which is constantly evolving and updating. To take one other example: the people behind Uber - far brighter, if less morally inclined than any of us - solve the market making challenge in each new city with price [subsidies](#) up to 60%. We are showing it can be done with painstaking aggregation of public and charitable agencies. But the frugality is a constant risk.

The best analogy I can come up with is a single aircraft airline. The pilot is already working unpaid, which is unsustainable. The only cuts we can make now are to the maintenance team that keeps the plane flying. Anticipating financial disaster, we have already cut the cleaning team. Like passengers entering a dirty cabin, our system users are noticing that interfaces are slow, obvious bits of functionality are missing, and we lack the intuitive feel of better funded apps. This is happening because I have been encouraging developers to take leave so I can bank hours for a phased winddown of the system.

Faced with further demands for cuts from their backers, a responsible airline would ground the plane, refinance the company, then resume service. The point at which the risks to our users, our reputations, and the overall potential of this extraordinary project pass the point that any responsible manager would continue operations is a delicate decision. We are grappling with it now on a daily basis. When a point of irresponsibility is clearly reached, we just have to shut down the platform. Preparation for that will take several weeks: we have to give all users time to export their data and get set up on some alternative system; we need to tidy up the code before we lose the developers then have them put it all in escrow to be resuscitated at some later point.

We all also need to understand the importance of Long Beach to this project. They are our learning lab producing insights on soft badging, synthesizing onboarding, and models for employer of record that are all underpinning other rollouts. We have hundreds of active workers in the platform there.

5) How we will Refinance

I have always been clear with TWL what our path to refinancing involves. I will have to explain to funders why with \$1,000,000 invested post-pandemic, we only have the same launches that we were preparing for before Covid. The \$1,000,000 has allowed us to improve the system for sure, and Long Beach has expanded activity steadily; but funders want to see thousands of workers benefiting and our work with TWL has barely shifted the dial there.

I am not willing to write emails or sit in meetings justifying lame progress after Covid by recounting destructive events that occurred while working within TWL. Nor am I going to battle inevitable perceptions that we at this end have been part of the problem. We strive for a culture of learning and humility, but do not believe we are in the wrong in any of the

events that have set this program back, apart from possibly waiting too long while assuming someone with more mature patterns of behavior would intervene at TWL.

There is an obvious solution to this quandary. I simply take my evidence of everything that happened to a reporter on a credible publication with fact checking resources. They write a piece pointing up the potential for what we are doing, and where things might have been had we been more fortunate in TWL's management. I then use that verified reporting to open doors to new dialogue, and link to it in emails to bypass an inevitable hunger for details about our time within TWL.

Your lawyers have positioned this strategy as driven by spite or a desire for attention. This ignores the fact that no-one except my husband and board (in Britain) currently know about my complaint unless TWL has told them. The lawyers' perception seems like one more sign of how out of touch they are with our world. Airing a documented story of injustice is a well-established path where there is a mismatch between the resources of the offender and their target. It is [how](#) SVCF management were finally jolted into action for example.

As a journalist I have worked on many such cases, often with impressive results for the wronged parties. These stories, taking down a corrupt - or just complacent - organization, are driven by production deadlines, competing story pressures, and availability of resources just like any other journalistic assignment. Feelings of anyone involved are irrelevant.

I have previously shared how I have also adopted this path as a protagonist in the story in a case where PricewaterhouseCoopers were trying to retain key intellectual property on our technology, and where a UK central government department was seeking to block us to avoid revelations about their internal systems' inability to interface with ours. I do it because it works.

And, to close down any debate on what you may see as a key subtopic: I am not going to hold back details of the story because of the additional damage they might inflict on TWL. Doing so would put me back in the gray area of "*you must have been part of the problem*".

So, for example I am not willing to engage in discussions about "*Why didn't you do more to alert Adrian Haro to the problems his actions were causing?*" His view that "*I need to be more involved in this project because I am so talented, it's a gift from God*" [see e-mail evidence in the complaint] explains his mindset. How was I supposed to argue with an I-am-anointed complex? Likewise, I am going to head off queries about "*Why didn't you alert the directors*" by documenting the occasions when I tried and conversation was declined, even though I offered off-the-record dialogue. My aim will be to get the whole story out in one go then move on.

6) Consequences of Publicity: for TWL and Partners

I have tried to advise TWL on the realities of the above situation, not as a threat; to help you minimize the impact. To recap: anyone can tell a story involving a sequence of events that happened to them to anyone that they choose. (There are some legal restrictions, but none apply in this case.) Any account of events cannot be defamatory if its substantive claims are true.

Any responsible reporter will make sure that TWL are invited to respond to my account of events and that response is summarized in the coverage. Refusing to comment will not halt publication. If your comments are contradicted by the evidence, you should expect that to be pointed out.

The key point to understand as a subject of a story like this is: When I go to a first reporter, I will be starting a chain reaction that I can't stop or control. I have no doubt, given the solidity of evidence and the significance of TWL's origins, I will get the heavyweight first article I need. But no-one can predict where the story goes from there. (I may push the story to other outlets if doing so will raise our profile among people I need to engage, but it will be the same story.)

We should collectively think about how to protect innocent parties who will likely be impacted by the coverage. I see four immediate groups, in no particular order:

a) [REDACTED]: The [REDACTED] link to TWL is public knowledge and will be the way any journalist is going to enter this story. We should collectively ensure union leadership are not caught on the back foot by giving them an opportunity to extricate themselves from the story at the start.

Consider these two headlines, either of which could sit atop our sequence of events:

Emails Reveal Bullying, Racism, Cover-Up at [REDACTED] Innovation Unit

[REDACTED] Disowns Workers Lab Over CEO's Behavior

The first is what I would expect on the story if I have to take what I have now to a journalist to get my account of events out. It appears to implicate [REDACTED] in the TWL malaise. The second, which takes [REDACTED] out of the story immediately, is how the story can be positioned if there is an [REDACTED] statement saying they are not happy about what happened at TWL ready.

For clarity I will have no control over the structure, or headline, of a story written by any credible outlet. But I'm confident I have enough experience to predict what they will pull from the content for maximum impact.

And I am aware the sanitized understanding of events that I think prevails within TWL may be reassuring because your lawyers have determined that whatever went on did not meet a legal threshold for bullying or racist harassment under California law. They may be right, but it's inconsequential. Journalists write in everyday English; look up your Merriam Webster, not the Penal Code, to find a justification for

words used in headlines. And Cover-Up? The plain English description for an organization that hires lawyers to threaten a complainant, ignore evidence, and conceal their conclusions.

To get [REDACTED] off the hook, you should open dialogue with one of their comms people. They won't take approaches from me alone seriously. I suggest targeting someone senior and that you invite me to a meeting, I can explain events in journalistic terms and be available if they - quite rightly - want to test the evidence. To give them a chance to process all this you should notify them quickly, otherwise they could be left responding after the story breaks which tends to look like "*We're only disowning this because it was found out*".

b) TWL staff: I suggest you share this email with your staff. It is unfair to tarnish their work by association with mistakes by management once events emerge. Again, responding to bad behavior after it is made public can look like only acting because you have collectively been found out.

As part of our protect-the-innocent strategy I will now remove you from a key part of our story by putting on record a conversation I recall in about June or July 2023. It was the first of our regular Thursday meetings with TWL without a lawyer present since my complaint had been filed in March. You were set to join these meetings for the first time.

The conversation between Adrian (AH), [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER], and me (WR) started while you (EM) were having a problem connecting to Zoom:

WR (during pause while we waited for you): This is awkward. It feels like we three should be having a conversation? We should clear the air (about the complaint)? We have to keep working together.

AH: We can't. It must go through the lawyers.

WR: I don't understand why you turned to lawyers. I expected TWL to sort all this out in a couple of weeks. [REDACTED - TWL ADVISOR], or [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER], or someone, could just have come in and said '*This s**t stops now. Everyone get to work.*' Your lawyers are the problem....

[REDACTED]: It should have been obvious. I don't know how it works over there (in Britain presumably). But over here, we always go to lawyers.

WR: Obvious to you maybe. Not to me.

You (having connected during this exchange): What are you talking about? I don't understand what you're talking about.

Adrian then said something like 'talk later' and we moved into my agenda for the call.

Your unaffected bafflement about the conversation convinces me; at that point you knew nothing about the complaint or how it was being handled internally. It seems odd that a member of TWL's senior management would not know of a body of evidence of wrongdoing led by the CEO and an active attorneys' investigation into it. But it chimes with a theory that Adrian was allowed to frame an investigation into his behavior, downplaying it internally. Unless contradictory evidence emerges, we can assume you were not party to constructing a cover-up.

c) TWL's funders: I have already given [REDACTED] a statement pointing out they do not micromanage their grantees and could not have been expected to see these problems until final reporting if at all. You should think about comparable cover for other organizations who have a public link to TWL, particularly for recent funds. And if any statements TWL has made to [REDACTED] about this case may have been - intentionally or otherwise - misleading, you would be doing them a favor by issuing clarification ASAP before they are undermined with evidence.

d) Our government partners: This one is on me. I encouraged diligent public officials in Long Beach, [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] to build a project in which TWL was seen as a key player while concealing what I knew about your organizational dysfunction. It was a gamble on my part; I genuinely believed TWL's directors would impose order and prioritize project delivery before now.

I will provide a statement and background explanation to each partner as we go down this path. Because of your ([REDACTED]'s) local position, the problem will be most acute there. It is important you and I work collaboratively to insulate [REDACTED - PARTNER BODY] as much as possible.

You may feel that TWL can get away with everything that's happened. Some organizations do. But you need to be aware of the risks you are running for other organizations and people. However odd it seems, we need to work together so TWL can implode responsibly.

And if you are offended by my tone, please remember: During this unhappy saga, you have paid external advisers to threaten me, you have presumed to understand my motivations, and you have determined our accomplishments can be sacrificed to protect your unspectacular operations. Please do not see our defense of our own integrity, and achievements, at this end as hostile. They simply mirror what you have done but with a more cost-effective option, because of our scarce resources.

7) Consequences of Publicity: More Widely

The section above applies to rules-based media; coverage by journalists like me; rooted in fair play, responsibility, delineating opinion from facts, and so on. Coverage will recognize the evidence shows wrongdoing stemmed from delusion and disarray, not a hidden ideological agenda at TWL. Out of this coverage I will get my landmark, independently fact-checked, piece. My burst of media strategy will then be over, and I will plunge into funder outreach and proposals for recovery.

There will likely be further coverage, the specialist press made hay with "*What Went Wrong at SVCF?*" analysis after staff there broke that story. You should expect the same, possibly reaching into wider media because, unlike SVCF, your response to the issues has been so egregiously secretive and biased.

I will explain constantly that the victim of TWL's malfunctioning is not me, an old, white, British guy; it is the millions of low-wage Americans waiting for their public agencies to tackle hardship caused by fragmenting employment. TWL all but wrecked government bodies' most promising attempt to do that at scale.

Through that lens, we need to consider how one particular group of "journalists" might seize on the story once public: the right-wing conflict entrepreneurs spawned in Fox News' orbit. The convergence of two forces should concern us:

1. **Resurgence of Organized Labor:** Doing down unions is a key priority for them as a buoyant UAW in particular becomes hitched to Biden. (This is another reason it's so vital to let [REDACTED] get out of our story now.)
2. **Woke Wars:** The far-right's idiotic "anti-woke" campaigns have vilified school librarians and electoral workers but with marginal success; those tend to be quietly competent people working in a regulated environment that guides their actions.

Adrian is a gift to this currently febrile universe. Evidence reveals him brimming with self-satisfaction as a champion of queer BIPOC people, it shows his irresponsibility, grandiose statements, and his conviction Caucasians are an embarrassment at meetings. He is "calm" about siphoning funds intended to serve working class families to lawyers working to conceal consequences of his childish behavior. And he is enabled by some of America's most prominent left-leaning organizations. (The groups where board directors work.)

These voices will likely claim ideological fervor, not boring mismanagement, animates TWL's mis-steps. They will present TWL as emblematic of America's NGO's and CBO's. I am not justifying this hideously slanted approach for a moment and will do everything I can to deflate any "white rights" angle that emerges. But I am not going to spare you this aspect of the chain of events TWL is choosing to unleash. It is a scenario obvious to anyone who follows US media.

An answer to this part of the problem eludes me. I am out of my depth in reporting so untethered to any public service commitment; British television produces some of the most regulated journalism in the world. (That's why Americans love the BBC.) A conventional approach to story containment (allowing external organizations to disassociate from a scandal before it becomes public) may not work in a world with so little respect for truth or balance. I suggest TWL begins an audit of its networks; are there any other murky issues likely to surface if reporters start digging? What political connections could suffer in a feeding frenzy?

There are a handful of exceptional people with the integrity, grit, and maturity to go through a mauling by the right-wing machine while communicating their message with dignity and agency, (Christine Blasey Ford and Ketanji Brown Jackson come to mind). Adrian isn't one of them. Those of you who have facilitated him getting this far owe it to his wellbeing and the wider sector to develop a handling strategy for this phase that minimizes damage.

And can we agree in any comments either side makes: Events at TWL demonstrate nothing about left-of-center organizations, unions, the psyche of CBO's focused on ethnic/sexuality groups, or government. Whatever your interpretation of events, you should respect that this was only ever a story about an over-promoted CEO, an indulgent (or hoodwinked?) board, and pointless lawyers muddling into a mess that has endangered a promising public innovation. You should constantly delineate it as nothing more.

I will work with you or anyone else who can help put up that ringfence. But to close off any debate: I repeatedly tried to warn Adrian about his behavior, privately, through his friends, and officially. I have reached out to TWL's directors and advisors to try to halt the slide when it was clear the problems were being compounded. Time after time you didn't get the message. Assuming I will ease back on protecting my work because TWL has now walked into a quagmire none of us could have anticipated is unrealistic.

RESPONDING TO YOUR CASH CRUNCH: ANOTHER PATH

8) A Journey for TWL to Travel

Even if [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] doesn't come through in time, we could still avert disaster on this project. But it requires an abrupt change of mindset at TWL. I am again going to try to puncture what seems like industrial-grade complacency among your management.

What follows is not from any position of superiority. I happen to be marinated in the need to demonstrate value-for-money to backers that is inevitable in system-change innovation in its early stages. And I have experience probing organizations that struggle to address their internal issues as a journalist. I may have some insight to offer.

I think I see a bedrock assumption within TWL that goes like this "*America's workers badly need innovation therefore TWL's work is important*". This needs unpacking. Yes, lower income workers desperately deserve new models of employment. But that doesn't automatically mean TWL as currently constituted is equal to the task. Given all the dollars poured into TWL, what has broadly been achieved? (Think about outputs not activity; it is

easy to assume attending conferences, having warm conversations with interested people, or making pronouncements, equates to progress. I am suggesting TWL brace for steelier assessment.)

I am not trying to minimize your ambitions or intentions. The emergency cash program does seem to have impacted widely, this program might yet do so and - as I have always acknowledged - Adrian spotted our potential early. But you might be on the way to some unforgiving scrutiny, it is as well to think through the value TWL itself adds to American workers in the calm before a storm. For example: What might the dollars poured into your Gig Worker Learning report (actually just a slidedeck?) have achieved if diverted to rigorous primary research going on at - for instance - the Shift project at Berkley?

I want to have a shot at explaining what I think could have happened to the mindset at TWL based on a formative experience in my career:

As a newbie TV producer in my 20s, I stumbled into a small, early, part of what would later become worldwide revelations about child sex abuse in religious institutions. I then spent a year producing a broadcast about it all while agonizing that my story was going to collapse. As we unearthed ever more survivors, documents, and witnesses it seemed obvious that church leadership would have to face the internal wrongs they were ignoring. As people preaching the highest standards, they would surely report themselves to the authorities, publicly apologize, open the files allowing families to reunite, fund travel for survivors, and put in place processes to make sure it could never happen again.

That would leave me not with a headline-generating story about abusive monsters and their cowardly coverups, but a program introducing some contrite, all-too-human, clerics who had genuinely learned from their mistakes and were doing everything possible to make things right. It would effectively be a PR piece for the religious orders which would make zero waves and attract minimal viewers.

There was no cause for worry. I had many meetings with kindly old men leading the various groups, some of them abusers themselves. They viewed our claims as a distraction; their faith positioned them as instructors of others including me; ecclesiastical law by which they lived had no concept then of sexual abuse; there was no mechanism for firing priests; no one knew who might take charge of the issues given the extent to which leadership was implicated. The whole production team sensed bafflement that *"We fed and sheltered these children; why are they whining about nighttime groping 20 years later? Why aren't you covering our good work?"*

We got our story. Outrage was triggered. Politicians took up the cause, questions were asked in parliaments, and the survivors were compensated by bankrupting the organizations.

I am categorically not equating Adrian's puerile antics with the vile activities these organizations were relegating as a secondary issue. I am using an extreme example to point out how groups that set out to do good can easily slip into self-absorption in their own world view and insular assumptions about their value to the world. That makes it hard to understand how the outside world will see things.

Since the experience above, I have watched many organizations blunder into incompetent, even criminal, behavior while personally giving thanks for blindspots that stop them addressing those issues without journalistic intervention. But the TWL case is different. I really need TWL to quietly own its failings because you doing so gives us the best chance of delivering on the monumental project we have jointly signed up for. It also offers by far the least worst outcomes for TWL as individuals and an organization.

But there is a principle I have learned through observation: organizations capable of ruthless assessment of their own blindspots are organizations that tend not to get into the sort of crisis TWL has precipitated. You will likely cling to your prioritization of line items and a view that I am ungrateful.

But if there is anyone at TWL seeing this email before the story breaks who accepts my point, I offer these suggestions:

1. **Revisit my complaint:** Set aside what you may have been told about my probity, thinness of skin, or attitude. There may be some imprecise wording in the document because of the time pressure under which it had to be produced, but the substantive allegations are built on solid evidence. Go to TWL's email servers to pull up the sources quoted; your lawyers have admitted in writing they didn't. If any part of the account seems unconvincing drop me a line, I'll accept the cross examination and respond with evidence. Then contrast TWL's handling of the issues raised with comparable events at SVCF and other non-profits. This may help a journey towards *"We can't go on airbrushing these issues and have to face the consequences"*.
2. **Start talking:** If any director at TWL wants to break ranks on groupthink and reach out to me, it can be completely off the record. (A WhatsApp to my British number below is the best way to contact me, my US phone stops working when I am in Europe.) I won't share with anyone else, even within TWL, that we have talked, or impart any information I receive. But we can work to quickly extricate at least some innocent parties from TWL's misadventures in the public domain.

9) Resolving Chicago

Around the end of 2022 I became aware TWL was paying New America to explore launch of our platform in Chicago. There were welcoming aspects to this news; a city that size would be a welcome addition to the portfolio.

I have long advocated for TWL driving launches independently. In summer 2022 for example, I introduced [REDACTED]. then TWL's [REDACTED], into dialogue I had set up with the [REDACTED - CITY] workforce board. When that led to their commitment to bring in other

regional stakeholders, I ceded the conversation to [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER], a former employee of the city. Unfortunately, momentum then died. But having launches in which someone other than us is in the driving seat is a good control experiment, could neophytes do it better because of entrenched blindspots in our thinking?

But Chicago is now a point of contention between us. It is still missing our usual logic for launch; a big public agency championing the project. And given how long we have known a cash crunch was coming, paying policy wonks to learn the very specialized form of project management we have developed around market launches, seems like a luxury; particularly as New America was funded for Illinois while my spells in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] last winter had to be funded from [nonexistent] reserves at this end.

The importance attached to Chicago by TWL is out of proportion to its value to the overall project. That's becoming another destabilizer, consuming time, and resources we can't afford. As example, our regular Thursday project updates meeting on 9/14 was unilaterally cancelled by TWL citing lack of time at their end. Yet the same day, two hours were found for training sessions and presentations with parties in Illinois. This happened just as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in Long Beach had been given their formal notice of termination of employment. Last week our project meeting needed to focus on cutting spending. But New America's Program Lead was unilaterally invited to attend and use the time for queries about arcane technology issues. Instinctively, it feels like Chicago launch is a job preservation initiative within TWL. But I have no hard evidence to support that hunch.

As I have explained to the Chicago team, and to TWL, repeatedly, we should stop diverting effort to Illinois launch until it can be solidified. Although the initial groundwork was done without my involvement and only minimal knowledge on my part, there are now regular requests that I - or [REDACTED] - attend sessions with potential stakeholders there. I have been complying with these, as has [REDACTED]. But we are now entering an even more precarious phase on the overall program and focus is essential.

The current situation, as I understand it, in the Windy City is:

1. **Two CBO's are indicating serious enthusiasm for launch.** [REDACTED], which is the key one because they have the client demand, appears to be a credible and competent potential partner. But alone, they do not have levels of demand that would get a regional labor market to critical mass or any visible pipeline to that volume of activity.
2. **Early government discussions are underway:** Adrian or New America has engaged the [REDACTED], the [REDACTED], and the city's [REDACTED]. [The latter is more significant than it may seem; they will be huge users of flexible labor.] Enthusiastic accounts of these sessions have been relayed, but my understanding is we are nowhere near any commitment.

Our recommendation is that Chicago launch needs the kind of intense work invested in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], even when we had a public agency fully on board. That will take months, but possibly remains worth doing because of [REDACTED] solidity and the scale of the place. But determining its relative importance requires an unemotional assessment of the value of this sub project at this fraught time:

3. **A Chicago launch will require a new instance of our platform:** With lack of planning horizon for technology development (because of constant uncertainty over next month's funding,) we have not been able to make our software multi-timezone. The only way we can serve a region in Central Time is with a duplicate version of the entire system. Our technical architect was diverted to preparatory work for this in July, we would lose another month of developer time for implementation and testing. Any decision about launch of the CT version is now one more aspect of the uncertainty about decisions coming out of TWL.
4. **The launch will prove little:** Our case to funders and federal government, proven in Long Beach, [REDACTED], and [REDACTED], is that public agencies will - when the right conditions are identified - fund launch of our platform by their local partners. Thus, it is a good investment to fund the technology core. Currently, Chicago proves only that if someone like TWL throws enough money at an urban area you will get some conversations going.
5. **The launch will reveal little:** New America are predictably as interested in the policy implications of our regional labor market as in nuances of implementation. They plan pop up questionnaires asking workers about their experiences with end users of labor for instance. But for its first year or so, any market of this nature is irredeemably fragile. It is thin on data, reflecting more the opportunistic nature of launch than any reveal about the local workforce. Also, the hard part of any launch is attracting clients (byers of labor). They have an array of one-sided workforce scheduling systems that keep labor costs down and their workforce malleable. Attracting them into a platform so blatantly constructed around worker empowerment, progression, and control is a hard sell. Assuming they will also accept what they are likely to see as intrusive scrutiny as part of using the platform is a real stretch. Just getting a platform like ours launched at scale needs to be recognized as a huge step forward for local workers; policy insights will emerge over time.
6. **There is no viable plan for user support:** In our three more advanced launch areas, launch partners and us are besieged by questions from and users. They range from trivial requests for password resets or "How do I" instructions, through to complicated strategic questions in which a user has spotted something the platform could be doing, but currently can't because we don't have the funds. We know what these issues are, I spend a lot of time constructing personalized workarounds using combinations of existing system configurations to reasonably approximate what the user needs.

When I've asked who is going to fulfill this function in Chicago, I am assured it will be the COO at [REDACTED]. I have made clear we can't be involved, we are stretched way too thin already. I have to allocate time to producing the training materials and other collateral to - hopefully - staunch this flow of queries at source. If you are to launch in Chicago, and avoid a wave of bad feeling, you need to find someone qualified for a deep dive into our platform, who reads all the existing documentation, sits in on existing sessions, and gets to a level of confidence where

they can act as a high-level user help desk. If that is the intention for CARA's COO, she seems unaware of it.

For these reasons, I have made clear to TWL that if instructed to deliver a CT version of the system, it will emerge with TWL's logo in the footer of each screen, not ours. The reputational risk of a Midwest launch at this point is too high. It will take more work, and it needs to find its rightful place in the competing priorities of this already hugely ambitious overall program.

But, as is so often the case in our world, there are additional factors. Following an introduction by a TWL board member last year, promising dialogue with the [REDACTED] national policy team has developed. They are now working with me on plans for a launch in [REDACTED -CITY]. (I keep copying [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER] into the emails and inviting him to the meetings.) Again, I am awaiting written commitment in terms of likely market volumes; so, it is too early to plan concretely. But they are now negotiating costs, while pursuing assurances of the kind of numbers we would need for rapid success. [REDACTED], of course, also requires a Central Time installation.

10) Your least bad way forward

I can see no good exits for TWL from a situation that has been allowed to fester to this point. You will I am sure balk at what follows, seeing it as unacceptable kowtowing to a grantee rather than a course correction required to maintain focus on workers with reduced budgets, but it is possibly preferable to becoming a Subject line in DeSantis' fundraising emails.

If you just want to sort all this out internally, here's a plan:

a) Reverse priorities: It is more important that this Design Sprint delivers on the potential now taking shape than that TWL preserves its internal finance protocols. You are funding us minimally already, keeping disbursements to us and Pacific Gateway on schedule should now be the overwhelming priority.

I don't know what you are currently spending on consultants, lawyers, paid partnerships, etc. but it probably has to stop. You might have to let staff go. If I seem unphased about that, remember your CEO's indifference ("*you're just a vendor, not my problem*") to the same situation at my end. And my people have been consistently more professional and productive than some of yours.

Unpalatable as it will seem, TWL may need to scale down, then rebuild operations as it proves value. This is the norm in project-driven industries; think of all the movie independents who staff up when they get a commission, then shrink to someone working unpaid on their kitchen table while selling the next idea. If TWL retrenched to just you building relationships and [REDACTED] handling operations would American's workers be any worse off?

b) Align your non-cash resources behind us: We need more hands on deck at this time, not telling us what to do, or competing with us to keep weak launches alive, but sharing the grunt work that is the reality behind successful implementation. Could [REDACTED] be loaned to us to work alongside [REDACTED] in Long Beach, [REDACTED] in [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]? I would ask him to add weight where each need help, and possibly run point on emerging launches like [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. This would only work if he wanted to do it, seeing it maybe as a way of bolstering his CV outside TWL for a few months, and he was available to us on a near full time basis. It creates more work bringing dilettantes into the team than they can contribute.

Even if [REDACTED] were only available to us part time, he might focus on production of training videos (accepting we have a clear idea what needs to be taught but constructive challenges and suggestions are genuinely welcome). Again, we can only work with people who want the assignment.

c) Communicate effectively: Directors' decision not to engage with us leaves us dealing with Adrian or you ([REDACTED]), who he lists as a "core supporter". This is bad practice in light of recent events. However, your status as a [REDACTED] begets trust and if you assure us you act on behalf of TWL, not to protect Adrian, that will be good enough for now. Unfortunately, I do not believe Adrian has the management experience to handle the sensitivities we must now collectively deal with.

d) Move faster: As explained in multiple emails, at this end we have to march to a regular rhythm which has constantly been uprooted by TWL's habit of committing to deadlines (for example on when disbursements will be confirmed) then ignoring them with no explanation. (Yes, I can prove it; just ask.) This habit multiplies the underlying uncertainty, setting back our work and increasing risk.

I suggest a focus not on your internal decision-making but on our current level of risk as the determinant of events from now on. That is what will start determining events. I am eking out what cash we can find from Value Added Tax rebates and so on while awaiting a trickle of new money that will come to us through partners in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

Definitively getting out of the swamp to which this is all now heading starts with a simple email to [REDACTED] and I confirming October disbursements. That buys a few weeks' thinking time. If TWL is willing to recognize our concerns and value, you will find we can be empathetic partners in a TWL cost cutting crisis, even if self-inflicted. (But the bedrock principles outlined earlier won't change.)

Absent that email about October disbursements, we have to proceed on an assumption of bad news. As we go through calendar-driven tripwires triggering steps towards a winddown, I will be judging when to go public about events at TWL. I can't provide a timeline for that. It's not clear if we should open up before winddown, to ease the burden of explaining it to stakeholders, for example, or after when I will have more time. I have made contact with a

reporter I think would be logical as first recipient of our story without revealing details yet, but wonder about the publication's schedules being too slow. And so on.

It could all happen at any time and events then tend to unfold quicker than the people involved anticipate. I caution you against deciding how to respond to any of this after you get a "Any comment for the end of our piece about your CEO?" call. And if there is any point I have not addressed in this sincere attempt to stop TWL directors sleepwalking into unknowable circumstances, feel free to just do the obvious: start talking. The offer of keeping it all off the record remains open, with the caveat that once our story starts rolling there's nothing I can do to stop its momentum however much TWL may finally realize what I have been trying to explain for over a year. Any brakes on this narrative need to be applied now; failing to alert [REDACTED] to these problems for example would be reckless.

Finally, there really is no animosity behind any of this. I learned long ago that good people periodically do dumb things, myself included in plenty of other contexts. I continued professional communication, and presenting TWL amicably to the outside world, even while Adrian was threatening to arbitrarily slash the results of years of my unpaid work. I expect the same courtesy from your end, even if we are inexorably grinding towards a bitter end to what could so easily have been such a productive relationship.

And a reiteration: Emails like this should be regarded as public documents. I will release them along with the complaint and other materials as background to coverage. Contact details, identities of innocent parties, and any information I am obliged to keep confidential under our short-lived contract will be redacted.

Wingham Rowan

PS: Apologies for length, and typos, I just don't have time to sub this down.

From: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@theworkerslab.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@theworkerslab.com)>

Date: Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 19:18

To: WRowan[REDACTED]

Cc: Adrian Haro [REDACTED][REDACTED - TWL STAFFER], [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@theworkerslab.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@theworkerslab.com)>

Subject: Re: Follow up to Thursday meetings: Response to TWL cash crunch

Hi Wingham,

Thanks for this email. As you know, I am on vacation until October 20, 2023. I am not sure what triggered this email and your desire to include past and current [REDACTED] in this correspondence. This email is confusing and its intent is not clear to me.

Before leaving for vacation, I asked everyone to let me know if there were any priorities or issues that needed to be resolved before I left. You had an opportunity to bring these things up with me and didn't. I am in meetings and traveling across countries for personal matters so I don't have time

to get into this until I return. I assume you have enough work and your funding has been guaranteed and paid for this month, so that should not hinder your progress.

Briefly, I want to remind you that you are a vendor of ours and have no line of sight into our finances or policies and procedures when it comes to our accounting. We have a precise understanding of our grants, resource allocations, and commitments. It is not appropriate for you to suggest we change our practices or grant agreements with funders to solely focus on you. We have other programs and commitments at the organization aside from the project on which we have engaged you as a vendor. Please refrain from encroaching into our internal business. We will continue to notify you monthly, as we have in the past, about our desire to move forward in the forthcoming month.

I have moved [REDACTED] to bcc. Any programmatic correspondence should go through Adrian, [REDACTED], and me ONLY. We are the program managers and you are externally hired by us to carry out some of the program's work. It is inappropriate for you to contact our board members as they do not engage in the day-to-day operations of our programs and organization.

Warmly,

[REDACTED]

From: WRowan[REDACTED]
Date: Thursday, October 12, 2023 at 9:20 AM
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] >
Cc: Adrian Haro [REDACTED][REDACTED - TWL STAFFER], [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] >
Subject: Re: Follow up to Thursday meetings: Response to TWL cash crunch

Hi [REDACTED],

Here it is in one sentence:

To be responsible, I can't just wait for the money to run out at end of October: if we lack funding for November, our processes to shutdown this operation have to start now.

This was explained to you two weeks ago, and Adrian last week. There are copious emails reiterating the need to know about the current month's disbursements (to cover next month's activities) by the beginning of the current month. I am sorry if it is confusing.

We have never gone this late into a month not knowing about the next disbursement. TWL remains unable to provide any timetable for a decision and clearly regards the matter as lower priority than we do.

Everything else flows from that. I have no interest in your finances. I am suggesting you take more interest in ours because – at TWL's insistence – they are currently dependent on TWL.

I recognize we are legally just a vendor to TWL. But you are pushing us into a situation which has wide ramifications. Assuming TWL can just walk away from problems it has caused – leaving a vendor to absorb the impacts - is a miscalculation at your end. I strive to make sure TWL are aware of that, for all sorts of reasons.

All the best

Wingham