

THE TECH WE WANT

Tech Whistleblowing

 OMIDYAR NETWORK™

FEATURING **IFEOMA OZOMA**

HOSTED BY **ANIYIA WILLIAMS & SARAH DRINKWATER**

ON **FEBRUARY 9TH, 2021**

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WELCOME!

Today's Agenda

THE TECH WE WANT | TECH WHISTLEBLOWING

- About Us & Our Work
- History & Current Scope of Tech Whistleblowing
- Two Tracks of Support
 - Track One - Resource Guides
 - Track Two – Relief Funds
- The Silenced No More Act
- Open Conversation (*drop anonymous questions in Slido!*)
- Wrap Up & What's Next

Note: *We will record this session until we begin “Open Conversation” so we can offer the information shared as a resource to the public.*

Aniyia L. Williams

Principal, Responsible Tech at Omidyar Network

- Tech entrepreneur & inventor
- Systems thinker & community builder
- Founder & Board Chair of Black & Brown Founders
- Co-founder of Zebras Unite and Black Innovation Alliance
- Featured in the news by New York Times, Forbes, TechCrunch, BBC, NPR, and others



Sarah Drinkwater

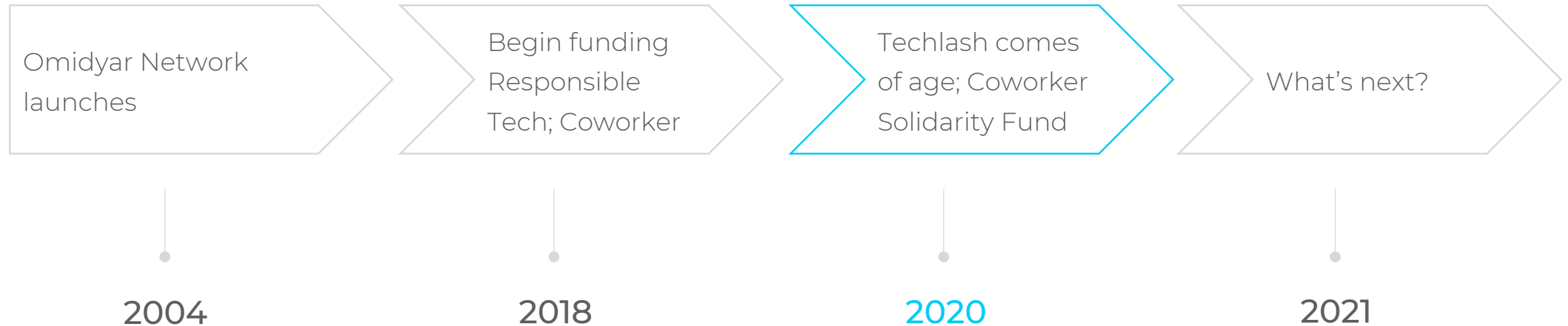
Director, Responsible Tech at Omidyar Network

- Entrepreneur and community builder
- Built community layer on Google Maps; focused on democratizing access to entrepreneurship at Google for Startups
- Journalist and writer for Guardian, WIRED, BBC and more
- Angel investor in community solutions + worker power with Atomico
- Board Data4Change, YSYS, and more.



Our Journey

We grew up in Silicon Valley alongside many of the companies whose dominance we now challenge. It's become clear to us the change we seek will not come from executives but from workers stepping into their power.



Ifeoma Ozoma

Founder and Principal, Earthseed

- Founder and Principal, Earthseed
- Global public policy, content safety development, US Federal, State, and International policymaker engagement at Google, Facebook, and Pinterest
- First Draft News Board of Directors
- Gender/race discrimination whistleblower



IT'S WILD OUT THERE.

**The world is
on fire.**



TECH WHISTLEBLOWING

History & Scope

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Corporations have improved upon the government's practice of mistreating whistleblowers.

- The scope of “tech whistleblowing” today:
 - Tech whistleblower = all workers within the tech industry, technical and non-technical
 - Whistleblowing primarily associated with civil penalties like NDA enforcement, NOT criminal penalties like Espionage Act/CFAA (Computer Fraud and Abuse Act)
 - Internal (abuses of employees) AND external (privacy/human rights abuses)
 - Location = US for now-though resources will be accessible globally

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Tracks of Support

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- TRACK ONE – Resource Guides & Educational Materials
 - Legal guidance
 - Media training/engaging with the press
 - Information and physical security
 - Case studies and first-hand stories from whistleblowers
- TRACK TWO – Relief Funds
 - Grant **direct monetary relief** to individuals who have been fired or pushed out of their roles due to whistleblowing and need help accessing **physical or mental health resources**
 - Still being scoped out at Omidyar Network

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Track One: Legal Guidance

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RESOURCES | LEGAL GUIDANCE

- Questions the guide should answer:
 - Why is it important to work with a lawyer when considering whistleblowing?
 - At what point should you engage with a lawyer?
 - Who are the lawyers to reach out to?
 - How can you safely contact a lawyer?
 - What should you prepare for a first conversation with a lawyer?
 - What are the types of questions you should ask a lawyer to determine whether you want to work with them?
 - How can you negotiate fees with a lawyer? What is a contingency agreement?

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Track One: Media Training

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RESOURCES | MEDIA TRAINING & ENGAGING WITH PRESS

- Questions the guide should answer:
 - What does it mean to be a source for a reporter/story?
 - What are the ethical guidelines reporters cannot cross when working with a whistleblower?
 - What does anonymity mean when engaging with the press?
 - Can a reporter or media entity *guarantee* your anonymity?
 - What questions should you ask a reporter about the way their outlet refers to sources?
 - What should you consider when deciding on an outlet/reporter to share your story with?
 - Are you safer from retaliation/legal issues when you go public?
 - How do you manage incoming press requests?
 - Is it possible to get free or discounted media training anywhere? By the way, what is media training?

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Track One: Information & Physical Security

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RESOURCES | INFORMATION & PHYSICAL SECURITY

- Questions the guide should answer:
 - How can you safely document your experiences and any relevant information you may share with a lawyer or reporter?
 - What should you do if you only have access to a company owned device?
 - How can companies monitor your activity on company owned devices and networks?
 - If you own your device but the company has monitoring software installed on it (Bring your own device policy), what should you do?
 - If a story is being published in which you are a source, how can you protect your identity online?

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Track One: Case Studies & Stories

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RESOURCES | CASE STUDIES & FIRST-HAND STORIES

- Lack of sharing stories contributes to “code of silence” that very few tech workers are willing to break
- Kicking off with Whistleblowers International Network’s (WIN), “Whistleblowers’ Corner”

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Track One: Distribution

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- Transparent and inclusive distribution across collective action organizations, formal unions, and informal tech employee gathering spaces online
- Inclusive distribution achieves two goals:
 - Resource guides are **not** secret documents and **not** only for those already considering whistleblowing
 - Ensures those who **are** considering whistleblowing get access to resources safely
- Transparency is highly important for trust, so funding and all contributions must be clearly stated

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Track Two: Physical & Mental Health Support

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Dan Price  @DanPriceSeattle · Oct 4

The average cost of COBRA is about \$20,000 per year for a family plan, which means you'd have to buy the equivalent of a new car once a year just to *get* access to your old insurance.

We need to de-couple health insurance from work



Some Workers Face Looming Cutoffs in Health Insurance

Coverage is a major expense for employers, especially those in small businesses, as they deal with the pandemic's economic fallout. Many ...

 [nytimes.com](#)

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 944

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Track Two: Physical & Mental Health Support

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RELIEF FUNDS

- **Mental health** - Funding of direct monetary grants to individuals and support of organizations willing to provide therapy and resources directly to whistleblowers.
- **Physical health** - Funding of direct monetary grants to individuals for COBRA payments, health exchange premiums, or copays.
- **Support groups** - Funding of organizations or grassroots efforts to create support groups.

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Tech Policy: Silenced No More Act

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- Introduced in California on Monday, February 8 by Senator Connie Leyva (D-Chino)
- Empowers victims of any type of workplace harassment or discrimination to speak out
- Expands protections from CCP 1001 (2018-2019) – covered sex discrimination/harassment/assault
- Coalition building for passage in California, building momentum for adoption nationwide

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Tech Policy: Silenced No More Act

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- Now: ALL covered forms of workplace discrimination in California
 - race, color
 - ancestry, national origin
 - religion/creed
 - age (40+)
 - disability, mental and physical
 - sex, gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or related medical conditions)
 - sexual orientation
 - gender identity, gender expression
 - medical condition
 - genetic information
 - marital status
 - military/veteran status

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Links Shared: During the Conversation

- Register for our next conversation (Tech Worker Labor Movement – Feb 22nd):
<https://omidyar.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMpcOusqTItH9CXeDusExFJXC-pKosqNzNj>
- Our Year in Responsible Tech: <https://medium.com/omidyar-network/our-year-in-responsible-tech-56c2d24714e2>
- The Solidarity Fund by Coworker:
<https://home.coworker.org/projects/coworker-solidarity-fund/>
- The European Union Whistleblower Directive: A ‘Game Changer’ for Whistleblowing Protection?
<https://academic.oup.com/ij/article/49/4/640/5941617?login=true>
- Spilling the Blood of a Silicon Valley Unicorn:
<https://ethicsinsociety.stanford.edu/events/spilling-blood-silicon-valley-unicorn>
- Theranos Whistleblowers Model Courage, Integrity:
<https://ethicsinsociety.stanford.edu/buzz-blog/theranos-whistleblowers-model-courage-integrity>
- Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Psychological Safety:
<https://academy.nobl.io/everything-you-ever-wanted-to-know-psychological-safety/>
- The Tech We Want Spotify Playlist:
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0o79pk1wLp7Alc8HIWdkOA>

Thank you!



FIND US HERE:

THETECHWEWANT.COM

Aniyia: awilliams@omidyar.com | [@operaqueenie](https://twitter.com/operaqueenie)

Sarah: sdrinkwater@omidyar.com | [@sarahdrinkwater](https://twitter.com/sarahdrinkwater)

Ifeoma: ifeoma.ozoma@gmail.com | [@ifeomaozoma](https://twitter.com/ifeomaozoma)