

Online Open Forum
The BIEN's working group on Clarification of Basic Income Definition (CBID)

1) Date: 14th April

Time: noon – 1.30pm (BST) / 11am – 0.30pm (GMT)

Speaker: Hilde Latour

Title: Bitcoin in relation to BIEN's definition of Basic Income

Abstract: BIEN's definition of Basic Income includes cash: "Cash payment: it is paid in an appropriate medium of exchange, allowing those who receive it to decide what they spend it on. It is not, therefore, paid either in kind (such as food or services) or in vouchers dedicated to a specific use."

Technically speaking, if cash is defined as physical notes and coins, no Basic Income scheme using electronic money would ever meet the criteria of BIEN's definition and we can close the discussion now. In reality, most, if not all Basic Income pilots use some form of electronic money. Furthermore, the monetary landscape is rapidly changing with programmable money issued by Central Banks, and the blockchain-jungle with all kinds of 'cryptocurrencies', most of which are scams, stocks or asset-backed without any transparency or control.

At the same time projects are sold as 'Basic Income' but in reality introduce expiry dates, limitations on what to spend the money on, collect all kinds of personal biometric data and transaction data or have hidden agenda's to sell financial products to marginalised people. This landscape is not only complex, but also often scary, creepy and unethical.

There is one exception: bitcoin. Bitcoin is designed to be a version of electronic cash that allows online payments to be sent directly from one party to another without going through a financial institution. The bitcoin-protocol uses peer-to-peer technology to operate with no central authority or banks or other custodial 'services'; managing transactions and the issuing of bitcoins is carried out collectively by the network. Bitcoin is open-source; its design is public, nobody owns the Bitcoin blockchain and everyone can take part. Bitcoin is money in the commons, gives absolute individual financial freedom and is designed to prevent double spending, such as fractional reserved banking. If stored properly, access to your bitcoin can not be taken away from you. Furthermore, no government, financial institution or anyone else can prevent you from spending or saving it. (<https://bitcoin.org/bitcoin.pdf>) The core values of individual financial freedom and permissionless, absolute control over your money (in deciding whether to spend or save and what to spend it on) overlap the core values behind basic income.

Please register via this form:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfpxC3oh5AUWRn2j-FsBxE1MaXIGIF7M6QEsAlgNrG7m-tb5w/viewform?usp=dialog>

The information on zoom link will be shown in the form.

2) Date: 21th April

Time: noon – 1.30pm (BST) / 11am – 0.30pm (GMT)

Speaker: Almaz Zelleke

Title: Is a Gender-Neutral Basic Income Gender-Inclusive? A Feminist Perspective on the Justification and Design of a Basic Income

Abstract: The broadly-accepted definition of a basic income as an unconditional, universal, and individual regular cash payment is gender-neutral, but is it gender-inclusive? The answer depends on what the basic income is for, and how it interacts with existing tax and redistribution policies with their own social goals. In this talk I offer a framework for exploring these questions in particular social policy contexts.

Please register via this form:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfR8v310p2UixvxF20aR8LHX2U75ODxEAzPqDZZY5s-t3AWKw/viewform?usp=dialog>

The information on zoom link will be shown in the form.

3) Date: 5th May

Time: noon – 1.30pm (BST) / 11am – 0.30pm (GMT)

Speaker: Lee Seng Kiat

Title: Design by Definition - deconstructing the definition to decontextualise Basic Income

Abstract: One of the most rigorous analysis on Basic Income can be reflected within BIEN's definition of Basic Income. Amidst the varying cries to improve BIEN's definition, Seng Kiat conceptualises the challenge of doing so by offering a deconstruction of the definition and exposing elegance within the existing definition. He then tests the limits of Basic Income's compatibility by decontextualising, and accounts for those limits by proposing a clarification format to complement the definition.

How to resister this session will be announced at BIEN homepage later and the next newsletter.

- We are planning to have further sessions in May and in June. The details will be announced at BIEN Homepage later and the next newsletter.

Annie Miller and Toru Yamamori (co-chairs of the BIEN-CBID working group)