Enriching Byron’s Local Economy:
How to Invest Locally
with Michael Shuman
Sunday May 7th at The Farm, Ewingsdale

Where exactly are your life savings right now? Chances are you’re supporting global companies that are largely disconnected from the Byron Bay economy. And you’re investing almost nothing in the local businesses that are critical for creating jobs, reducing social inequality, expanding municipal tax bases, attracting tourists, and fighting climate disruption. If residents of Byron Bay could shift even one percent of their savings to Main Street, it could more vibrant local businesses, more affordable housing, more renewable energy, more food self-reliance, you name it. This workshop is designed to help you personally and Byron Bay as a community develop practical local investment strategies.

Over the past three years, this workshop has reached hundreds of “students” across the United States, and it will be adapted for the emerging challenges and opportunities for local investment in Australia.

**This workshop aims to help you answer four essential questions:**

- How can I move my money into the businesses, projects, and people I love—and out of the dangerous casino of global capital markets?
- Given my financial profile (savings, debts, risk tolerance, etc.), what should my personal local investment strategy look like?
- How can I help deploy the tools of local investment to strengthen the Byron Bay economy?
- How can I make Byron Bay more resilient to prepare for future global crises that will come from new pandemics, climate disruption, and economic collapse?

Very few of us appreciate that we have significant alternatives to investing in global companies. Through superannuation funds, we invest our money in the stocks and bonds of the world’s biggest companies we barely understand. And our mutual fund managers, pension fund representatives, and investment advisors still insist these investments are the best bets for growing our wealth. Really?

In fact, you can invest in everything else that matters to you. You can put your money into that neighborhood grocery store you love, your little sister’s first house, or your nephew who needs to pay off high-interest student loans. If you’re smart about local investing, you can do this in a way that provides substantial, stable financial returns and lowers your risk. Plus, these commonsense local investments wind up strengthening your community, your local resilience, and your tax base.

Throughout the day, presentation, discussion, and group exercises will provide answers to the following questions:
For anyone interested in local investment:
• Why are local businesses so important for community development?
• What are the returns and risks of local investments?
• What are the most promising kinds of local investments?

For local investors:
• How can I find local investments?
• How should I evaluate local investments?
• How can I use my superfund savings for local investments?
• Why are community banks and credit unions important for local investors?

For local businesses looking for local investment:
• What local investment opportunities do cooperatives offer?
• What are the basics of Australia’s securities law?
• How can my business raise funds from accredited investors?
• How can my business raise funds from grassroots investors?

For policymakers:
• What kinds of community investment funds might facilitate local investment?
• What kinds of state and local policies can facilitate local investment?

The material in the workshop incorporates and updates key points from Michael’s last three books: Put Your Money Where Your Life Is (Berrett-Koehler, June 2020); The Local Economy Solution (Chelsea Green, 2015); and Local Dollars, Local Sense (Chelsea Green, 2012).

Workshop Outline
Sunday May 7th at The Farm, Ewingsdale
10:00 – 10:15    Introductions
10:15 – 11:15    What’s Local Investment and Why It Matters
11:15 – 11:30    Break
11:30 – 12:30    How Can I Find & Evaluate Local Investment
12:20 – 1:30     Lunch
1:30 – 2:30      What Might My Personal Local Investment Plan Look Like
2:45 – 3:00      Break
3:00 – 4:00      How Can Byron Bay Accelerate Main Street Investment

Workshop Leader
Michael H. Shuman is an economist, attorney, author, and entrepreneur, and a leading visionary on community economics. He is an Adjunct Professor at Bard Business School in New York City. He is also a Senior Researcher for Council Fire, where he performs economic-development analyses for states, local governments, and businesses around North America. He is credited with being one of the architects of the 2012 JOBS Act and dozens of state laws overhauling securities regulation of crowdfunding. He has authored, coauthored, or edited ten books. His two most recent books are Put Your Money Where Your Life Is: How to Invest Locally Using Solo 401ks and Self-Directed IRAs and The Local Economy Solution: How Innovative, Self-Financing Pollinator Enterprises Can Grow Jobs and Prosperity. One of his previous books, The Small Mart Revolution: How Local Businesses Are Beating the Global Competition (Berrett-Koehler, 2006), received as bronze prize from the Independent Publishers Association for best business book of 2006. A prolific speaker, Shuman has given an average of more than one invited talk per week, mostly to local governments and universities, for the past 30 years in nearly every U.S. state and more than a dozen countries.