



# Elizabeth Nearing

**Capacity Building Training Partner**  
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What fuels me is the possibility that unfolds from cultivating belonging; the idea that radical joy and imagination can help us co-create a better world for ourselves, our ancestors, and generations to come.

## What was your journey to this work?

I worked for 10 years in the American Theater, as a director, theater administrator, and developing community centered programming. In my early days directing I almost exclusively directed and taught Shakespeare, with some of my favorite collaborators as young as five years old. Increasingly, my practice became working with folks who didn't yet identify as artists-- building theatrical works together based on their stories. I did this at Long Wharf Theatre with IRIS-Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services, Connecticut Mental Health Center, Youth Continuum, and more.

.Over time, I have brought my learnings from the theater increasingly into civic spaces, creating gatherings where as many people as possible can have a voice. I work with Civic Impact Lab to imagine futures and create learning spaces where lived experience is centered with as much weight as academic or professional perspectives. Since 2019 I have been working with organizations to develop and facilitate community centered processes. I've recently worked with The City of New Haven, the International Festival of Arts & Ideas, and the Arts Council of Greater New Haven.



## Training History

Facilitative Leadership for Social Change with the Interaction Institute for Social Change, Center for Performance and Civic Practice trainings in 2018 and 2020, BFA in Directing from Carnegie Mellon University.

## What brought you to CEIO?

I first encountered CEIO when I went to a Deeper Change Forum in 2015 on Ancestral Healing with Enroue Halfkenny. I was working at a partner organization, Long Wharf Theatre, as it was partnering with the New Haven Free Public Library. From that first Deeper Change, I was hooked. I have remained hungry for spaces like CEIO that cultivate belonging, justice, and joy.

## Who is a role model you look to in your work?

Mariame Kaba, adrienne maree brown, and so many of the New Haveners I get to collaborate with here.



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