



## Media Release and Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Free cash giveaway outside former Lehman Brothers building urges people to rethink the economy

#### Film and photography opportunity:

14:00-16:00 EDT, Saturday 15 September, outside 745 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, New York

- Activists holding signs saying “FREE MONEY” will distribute dollar bills to passers by, for free
- Each person who accepts the free money will receive two dollar bills, on the condition that they pass one dollar to someone else
- The giveaway will take place outside the building where the collapse of Lehman Brothers ten years ago set off the financial crash
- Interviews with Wellbeing Economy Alliance spokespeople will be available

TEN YEARS after the collapse of Lehman Brothers triggered the 2008 financial crash, campaigners are encouraging New Yorkers to rethink the economy and our relationship with money – by handing out free cash.

Campaigners from global networks the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll) and Change Finance will hold signs saying “FREE MONEY” and distribute two one-dollar bills to anyone who wants them. The only stipulation is that people pass on half of the money to someone else.

This act of generosity in New York will be replicated across the world on the same day. Free Money Day campaigners will seek to highlight the problems with our current economic system, which has not changed for the benefit of ordinary people in ten years despite the dire warning of the 2008 crash.

By dishing out free cash, they hope to encourage people to rethink our collective relationship with money, and promote the idea of an economy based on sharing and collaboration.

“Free Money Day is an invitation for people to explore, in a liberating and fun way, what it might be like if our relationship to money was a little different”, said **Diego Isabel, Strategy and Connections lead for the Wellbeing Economy Alliance.**

“The 2008 crash was one of the clearest indicators we’ve had that the financial system is broken. Yet, global leaders did not take the opportunity ten years ago to transform the

economy to the benefit of all: instead they entrenched the ‘business as usual’ approach”, Isabel continued.

“We’re asking people to imagine an economy that serves people and planet, that works for all of us. An economy that is based on sharing and collaboration.”

**On behalf of Change Finance, Benoit Lallemand, Secretary General of Finance Watch**, said: “We are facing urgent challenges: social, environmental, political. It all starts with freeing society from the grip of finance.”

“When planned effectively, the financial system has enormous potential to be a positive force. We need to reset the system,” Lallemand continued.

**Donnie Maclurcan, Co-Founder of Free Money Day, added:** "The hidden story of our current ‘economic boom’ is that debt has kept rising, because money keeps accumulating. We're sleepwalking to collapse, with global debt having reached [US\\$247 trillion](#). Free Money Day is a chance to remind people that debt is temporary when money constantly circulates."

#### Notes to Editors

- **The Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll)** is a new non-profit alliance, which exists to help bring about a transformation of the economic system, of society and of institutions so that all actors prioritise shared wellbeing on a healthy planet. Born out of existing movements for system change, WEAll has more than 30 organisational members and seeks to amplify and connect the diverse movement for a wellbeing economy. **Find out more at [www.wellbeingeconomy.org](http://www.wellbeingeconomy.org)**
- **Free Money Day** is a global event in which people hand out money to strangers in order to raise awareness and start conversations about the benefits of economies based on sharing. <http://www.freemoneyday.org/>
- **Finance Watch** is an independent, non-profit public interest association dedicated to making finance work for society. It was created in June 2011 to be a citizen’s counterweight to the lobbying of the financial industry and conducts technical and policy advocacy in favour of financial regulations that will make finance serve society. It now expands its mission to include work on campaigns that demand systemic change, and coordinates the **Change Finance** coalition.
- The #10YearsOn campaign has involved over 60 organisations to reimagine the financial system. Its demands are focused on a financial system that **serves people and planet**, that is **democratically governed**, and that is **stable**.

### ENDS ###

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