Lian Zeitz

Care-centered leader · Organizational builder

Global health · Philanthropy · Systems change

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PROFILE

I build mission-driven organizations and raise the money they run on. Across 12+ years, I've helped grow citiesRISE from two people to twenty across four countries, joined Climate Mental Health Network as a founding team member, and now serve as second-in-command at Collective Change Lab. On the funding side, I have helped raise close to $20M for organizations I've worked with and advised on roughly $250M in grantmaking for ICONIQ Impact and Grand Challenges Canada.

My work sits in global health, philanthropy and systems change, most of it in mental health. I didn't take a straight path here. I grew up in Lusaka, trained as a hospital chaplain, and think in a neurodivergent way, which in practice means I tend to see connections between fields that usually stay apart. I am as comfortable sitting with a family in crisis or a youth advisory group as I am in a foundation boardroom, and I think the best decisions come from people who can move between the two.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Building and scaling organizations
- Org design and board materials
- Cross-cultural team leadership
- Multi-country operations
- Executive communications
- Strategy and landscape analysis
- Fundraising and funder relationships
- Grantmaking strategy
- AI and digital tool integration
- Convening and facilitation
- Youth and global mental health
- Lived-experience engagement

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Collective Change Lab · USA

Director — Dec 2024 – Present

Associate Director — Nov 2023 – Dec 2024

- Number two to the CEO. I share responsibility for strategy, fundraising and delivery, and I manage a $1.2M annual budget.
- Raised $1M in new funding in my first year. Funders I manage relationships with include RWJF, Omidyar Network, Carnegie Corporation, Humanity United, Vanguard and the Wayfarer Foundation.
- Helped take Healing Systems from a theory of change to an international field of practice. Our courses have reached 300+ practitioners in 25 countries, and organizations now use it, including Austin Community College, where I ran a year-long program for 30 leaders.
- Led two funded strands: spirituality and systems change for the Wayfarer Foundation (six-person advisory group, 20+ interviews, five public guides) and System Storytelling practice documentation for RWJF.
- Designed and ran five funder convenings, from a closed-door session with ten foundation leaders to a national gathering of 150. I raised the money for them, built the agendas, facilitated and handled follow-up.
- Co-write with John Kania, one of the architects of Collective Impact. Our work includes widely read pieces in *Stanford Social Innovation Review* and *Nonprofit Quarterly*, a podcast series and keynotes. Our audience grew past 20,000.

Prospira Global · North America

Regional Associate, North America — May 2023 – May 2025

- Advised ICONIQ Impact on a $200M global youth mental health initiative. I did the landscape analysis, helped shape the investment strategy and grantmaking framework, and wrote the portfolio recommendations for the executive team.

Stanford University · USA

Youth Wellbeing Consultant — Jan 2023 – Dec 2024

- Researched national trends in youth mental health to inform training for peer support specialists. Co-led focus groups and helped prepare the IRB submission for a community-based training model.

Climate Mental Health Network · USA

Senior Director, R&D and Operations — Feb 2022 – Oct 2023

- Joined as a founding team member. Raised $400K while building the operations to spend it well: finance, contracting, hiring and a distributed team of 15+ contractors.

- Built research partnerships with UC Berkeley and Imperial College London that produced several papers.
- Led the Lived Experience working group of Connecting Climate Minds, a Wellcome-funded project spanning seven regions. I managed people across partner organizations, trained regional research teams to work with people with lived experience, and coordinated the community dialogues behind three published research agendas (youth, Indigenous, and farming and fishing communities).
- Started a global Gen Z advisory board and an environmental justice curriculum.

citiesRISE · New York, NY · Global

Global Director of Love and Compassion Jul 2020 – Jul 2021
Director of Youth Engagement and Advocacy Jun 2019 – Jul 2020
Youth Program Manager Jan 2017 – Jun 2019

- One of the first hires. Helped grow the organization from two people to twenty across four countries and was promoted twice in four years.
- Raised $10M+ from Pivotal Ventures, Co-Impact and other funders, writing the investment cases and managing the relationships.
- Ran operations for our expansion from the U.S. into Colombia, Kenya and India. Rather than register entities in each country, we worked through local partner nonprofits. I wrote the partner agreements, set up financial controls for restricted grants and kept the U.S. 501(c)(3) compliant.
- Created the Youth Challenge Award. It began as a $50K grant from Johnson & Johnson in Kenya and grew to $200K across four countries. The City of Seattle later adapted it as its Youth Healing Awards.
- Built a network of 100+ youth leaders in five countries, who together reached more than 50,000 young people.

Global Development Incubator · New York, NY

Beyond Health Associate Jul 2016 – Dec 2016

- Strategy for three new global health initiatives: landscape analysis, board decks and partnership strategy.

Pathway Partners · New York, NY

Education Consulting Associate May 2012 – May 2015

- Advised families, clinicians and schools on difficult decisions involving youth mental health, behavioral health and grief. Co-wrote a book chapter on this work (Springer, 2017).

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Love Praxis, Founder (2026) · **Healing Together**, Consultant (2022, 2026) · **Denver Health**, Chaplaincy Resident (May–Aug 2023) · **Recovery Café**, Recovery Specialist (2021–2022)

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Making cities mental health friendly for adolescents and young adults. *Nature*, 2024.
Connecting Climate Minds: a shared vision for the climate change and mental health field. *Nature Mental Health*, 2024.
A lived experience perspective on overcoming mental health system challenges (interview). *Nature Reviews Psychology*, 2025.
Our lands, our minds: research and action agenda on Indigenous mental health in a changing climate. *Frontiers in Climate*, 2026.
Learning from the climate-mental health convergence. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 2023.
Towards mental health friendly cities during and after COVID-19. *Cities & Health*, 2021.

EDUCATION

Master of Divinity (MDiv) · Naropa University, Boulder, CO 2020 – 2023
Bachelor of Arts and Sciences (BASc) · Quest University Canada, Squamish, BC 2011 – 2015
Certificate of Leadership in Mental Health · LSHTM and Sangath, Goa, India 2015

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Young Innovator in Behavioral Health Award · Behavioral Health News 2023
Advisory Group Member, Service Users and Family Carers · World Psychiatric Association 2019 – 2021
Honorary Member · World Psychiatric Association

OUTSIDE WORK

Born in Phoenix, raised in Lusaka, Zambia, and have lived on four continents. Former competitive snowboarder.