THE WEIRD AND WILD x TEMASEK TRUST

What does it really mean to be catalytic?

An explainer about money that amplifies impact

A basic loaf of bread requires flour, water, and salt.

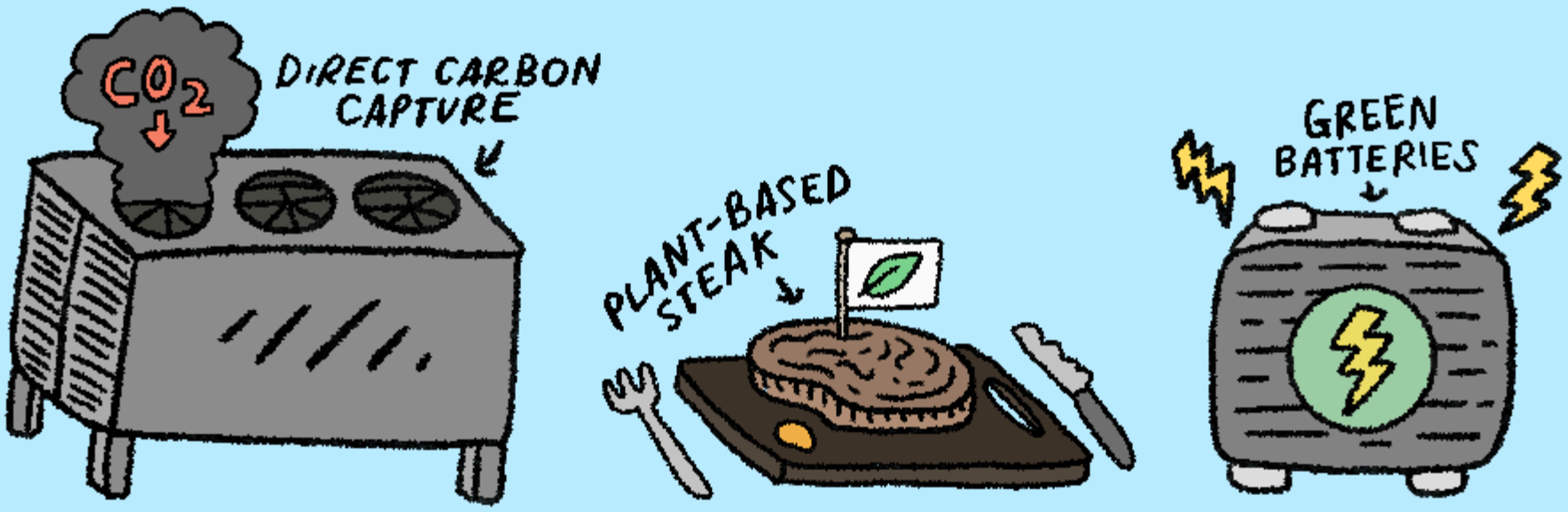
But more importantly, you need a raising agent such as yeast.

It helps the dough to rise significantly, creating a soft and fluffy bread when baked.

Being catalytic is to act like yeast, where a small amount can contribute to large growth.

Without yeast, the dough will not rise.

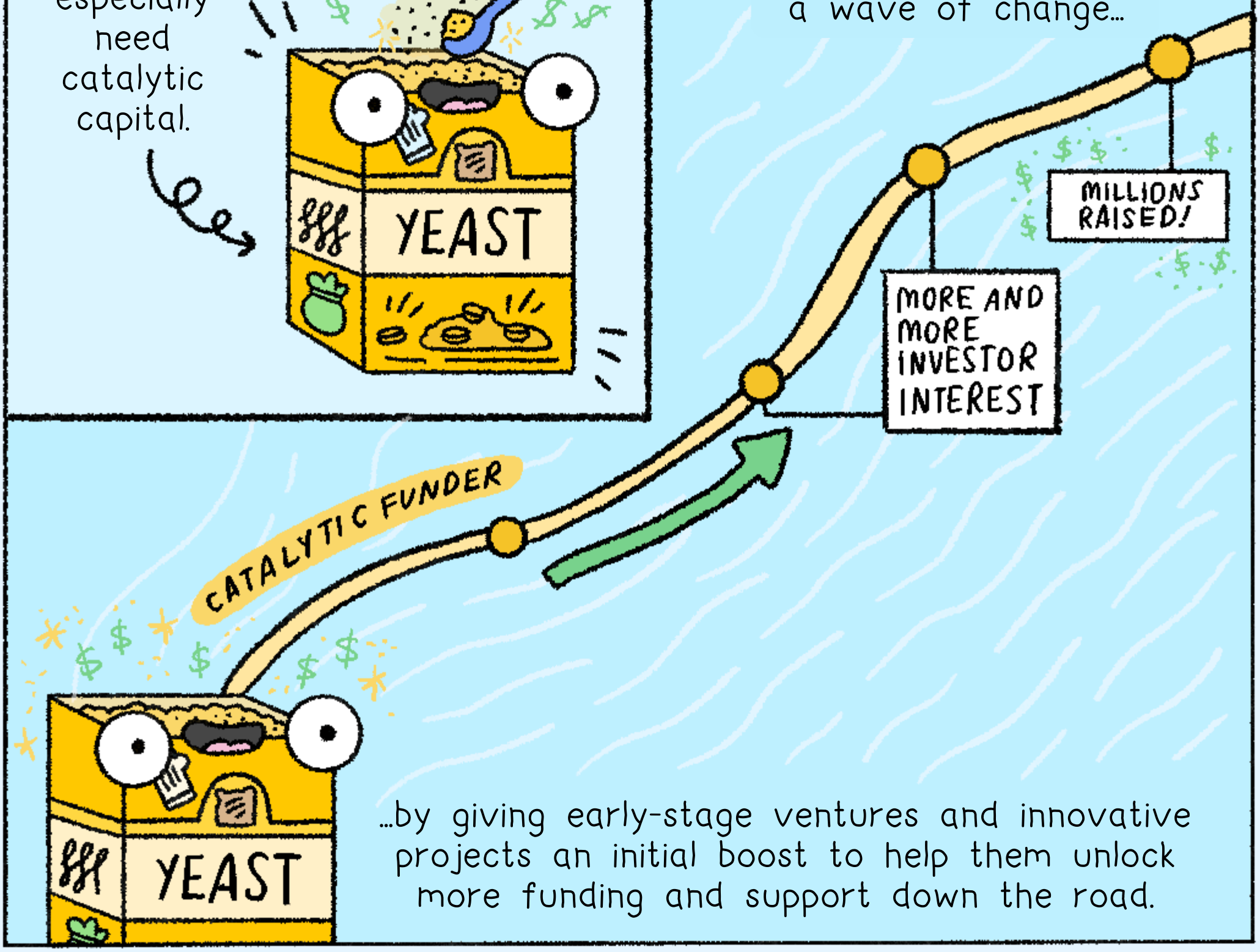
This is the case for climate solutions too.



Innovations require money (aka capital) to adopt and scale up.

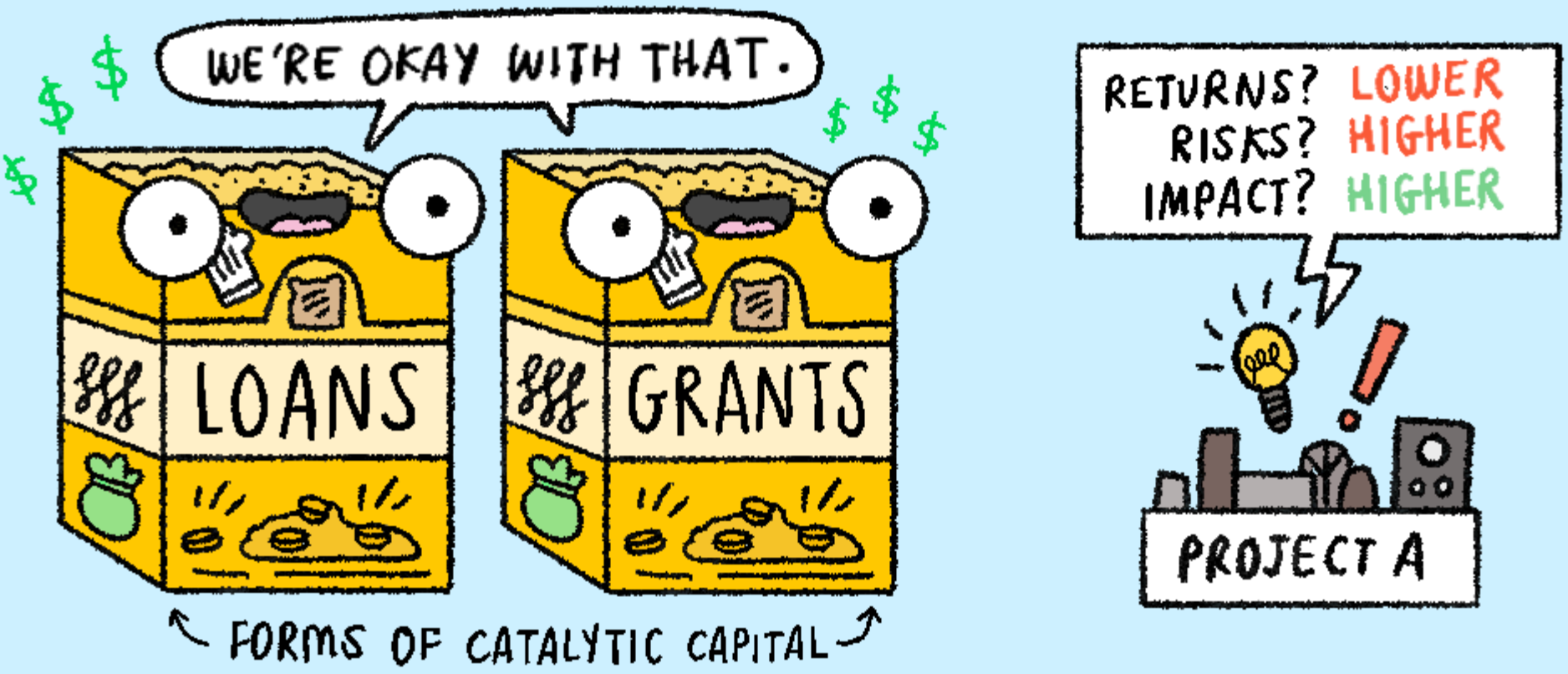
And they especially need catalytic capital.

Money that can spark a wave of change...

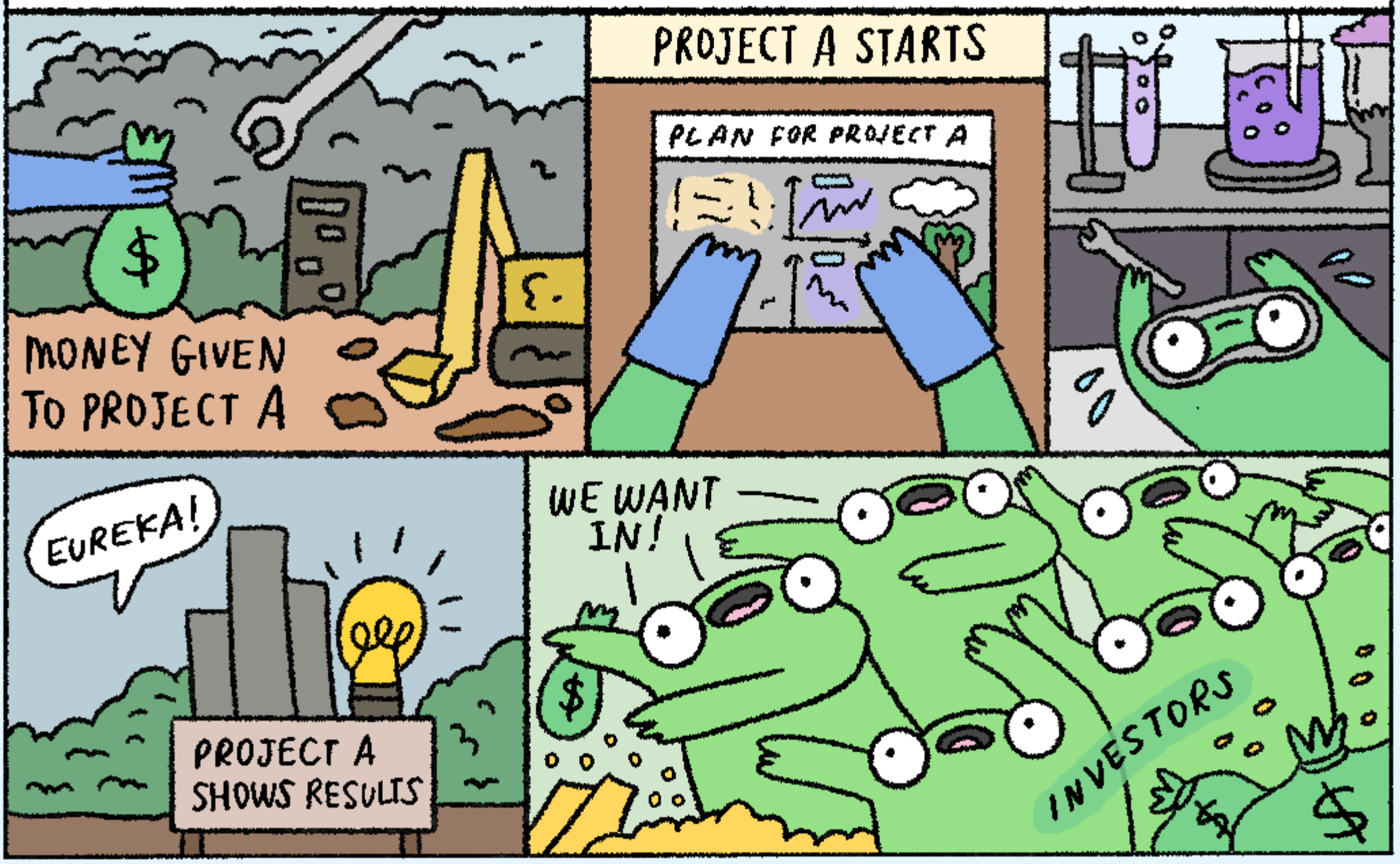


...by giving early-stage ventures and innovative projects an initial boost to help them unlock more funding and support down the road.

Catalytic capital may come in many forms like loans and grants. But compared to other types of funding, it often accepts more risks and/or lower returns.



This gives projects a fighting chance to show early results so that other investors and funders will be more willing to get involved.



Catalytic capital can support a wide range of impact-driven opportunities that aim to create long-term positive impact.

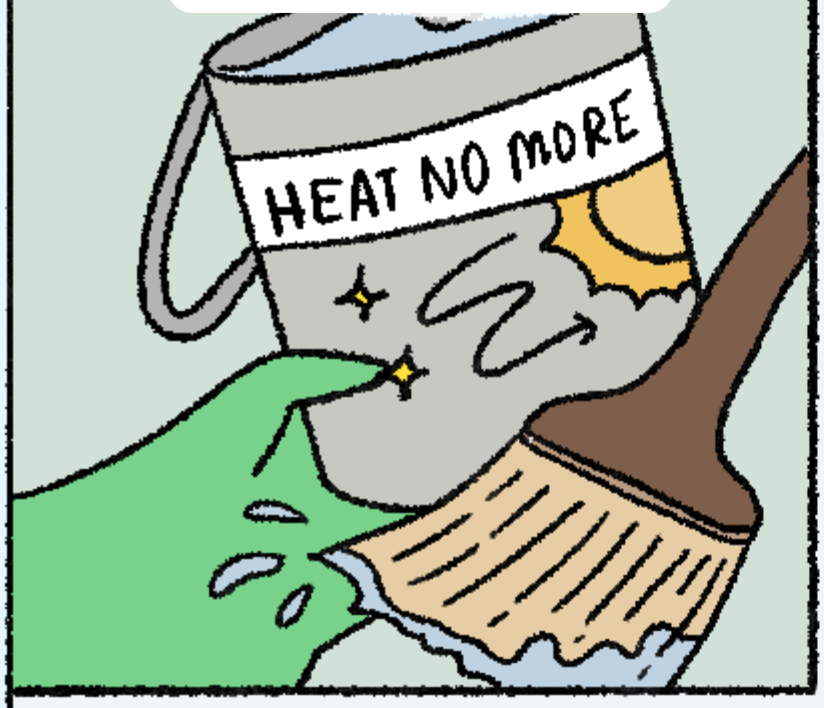
These include projects, early-stage startups, and social enterprises.

By reducing barriers to funding, it enables projects to grow, scale, and attract more investments. This creates jobs and improves quality of life for many, delivering greater impact.

Such funding can go to diverse sectors and projects, such as...

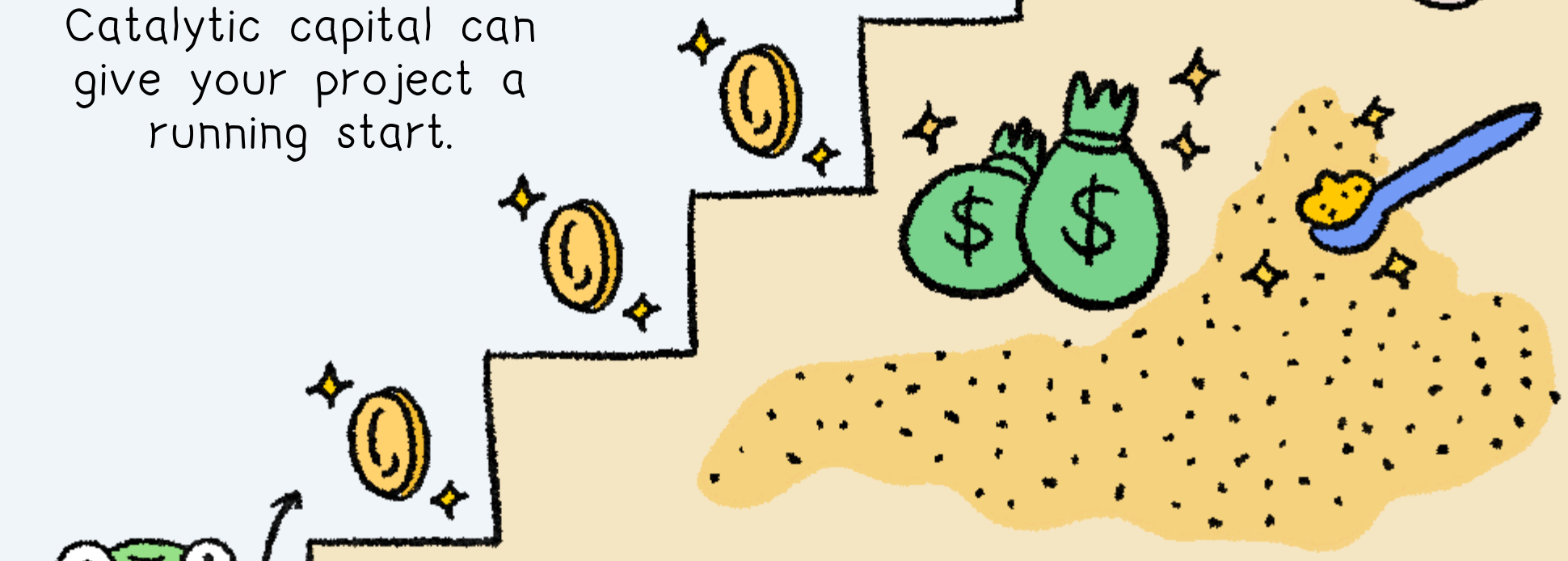
Infrastructure	Education	Health	Climate & nature
Wind farms, or clean energy projects	Climate education initiatives, or training teachers in rural areas	Mobile clinics, or telemedicine services	Sustainable agriculture, or wildlife conservation

Imagine if you came up with an innovative reflective coating that can be applied on roofs to reduce heat absorption...



...helping to tackle intense urban heat.

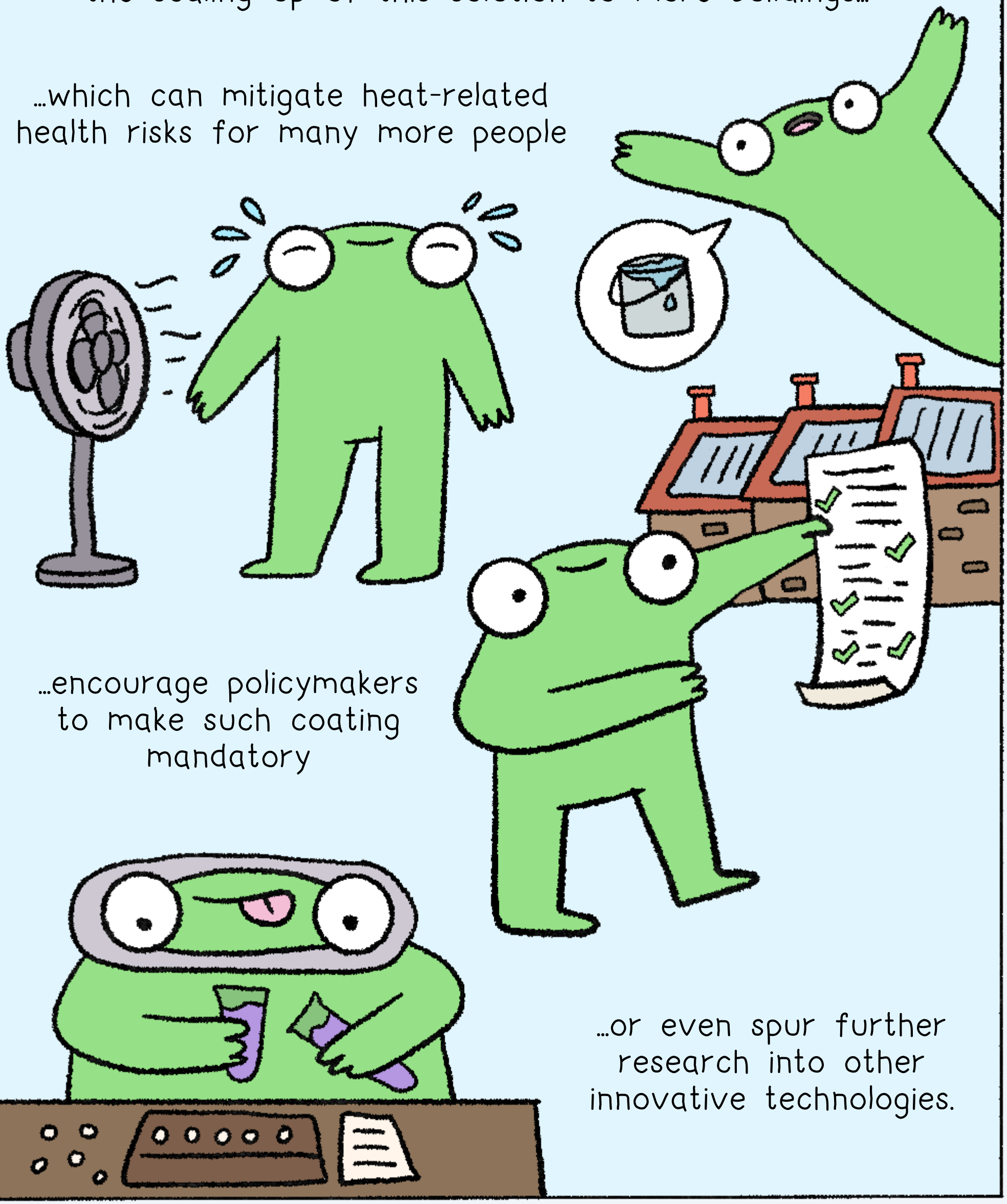
Catalytic capital can give your project a running start.



This could be a grant from a philanthropic foundation, to fund a pilot project that tests how much your coating can cool a small building, before you roll it out on a bigger scale.

If it works, it can encourage more funders to support the scaling up of this solution to more buildings...

...which can mitigate heat-related health risks for many more people



...encourage policymakers to make such coating mandatory

...or even spur further research into other innovative technologies.

Today, impact innovators may turn to initiatives that offer catalytic capital and support in the form of networks and resources, including...

Catalytic Capital for Climate and Health (C3H): An impact-first vehicle by Temasek Trust that invests in innovative, early-stage companies in the space of Climate, Health, and their intersection.

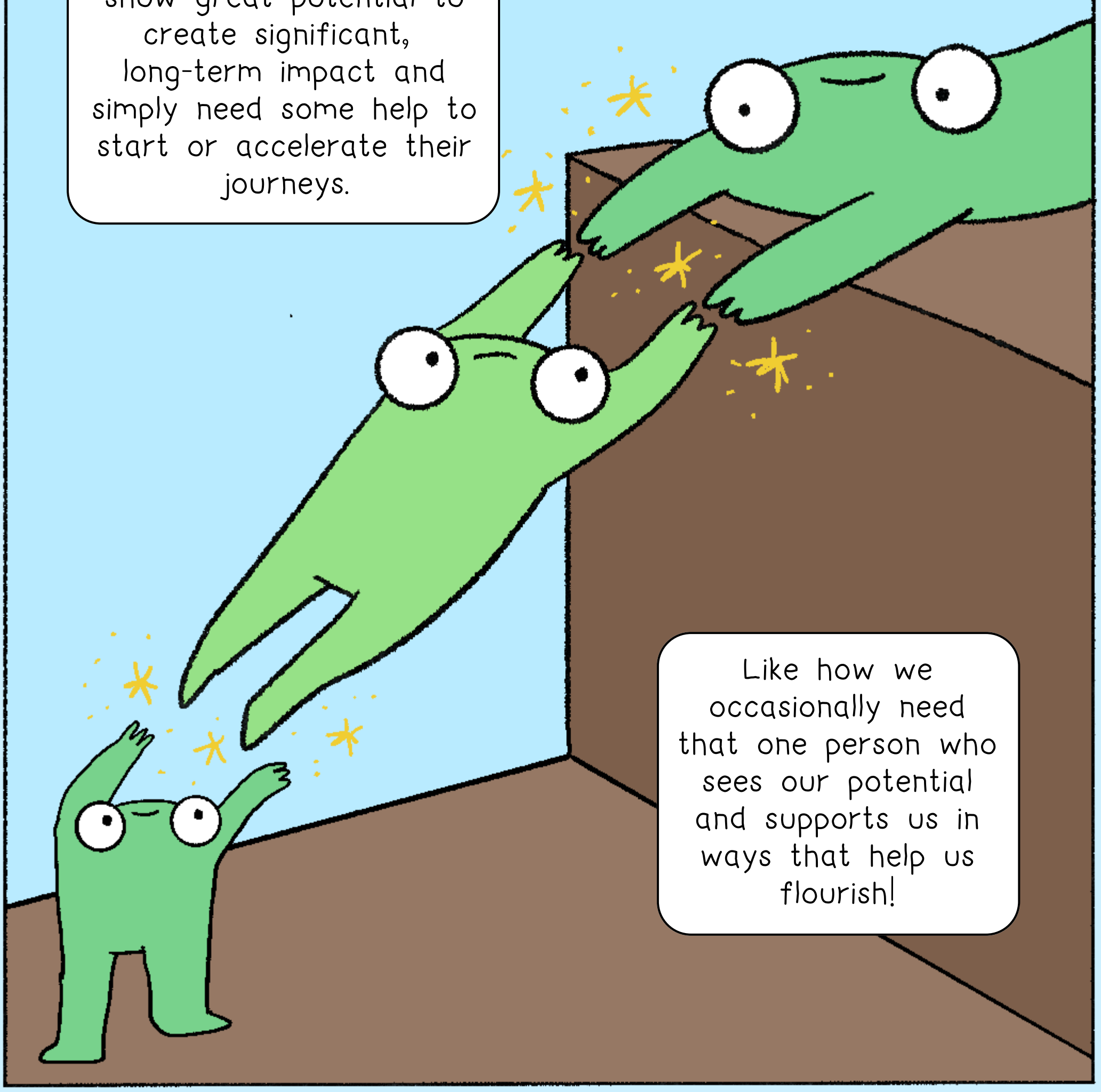
Co-Axis: A global digital marketplace connecting funders with about 100 impact opportunities from 40+ countries that advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The Liveability Challenge: A global crowdsourcing platform presented by Temasek Foundation that catalyses the commercialisation of disruptive climate innovations to deliver impact for People and Planet.

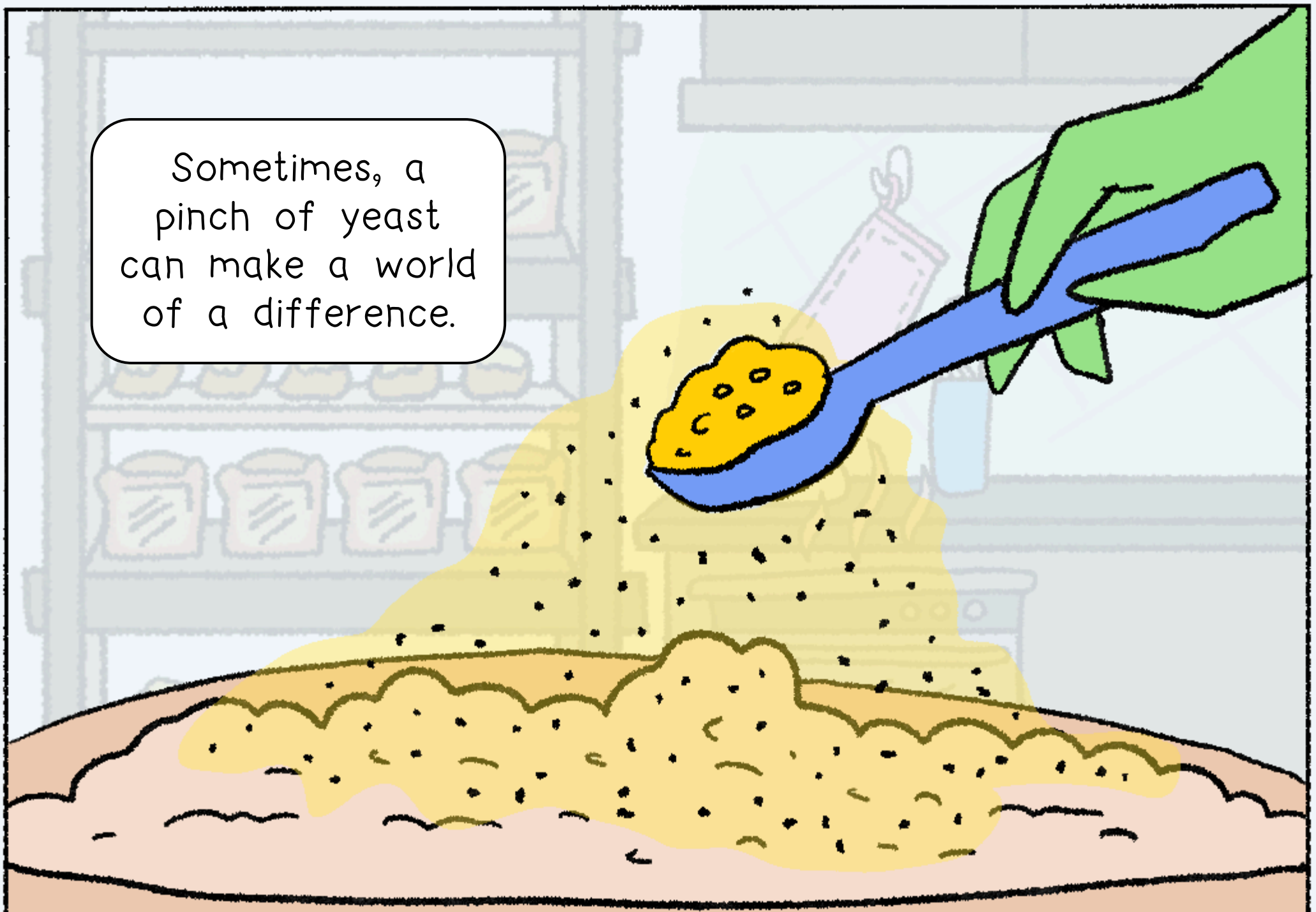
The Earthshot Prize: A global environmental award offering five winners £1 million each to scale innovative breakthrough solutions to protect and restore our planet.

Such catalytic funding and support enable projects to gain ground and amplify their impact.

Especially projects that show great potential to create significant, long-term impact and simply need some help to start or accelerate their journeys.



Like how we occasionally need that one person who sees our potential and supports us in ways that help us flourish!



Temasek Trust is a steward of philanthropic assets, advocate of sustainability, and catalyst of positive impact.

By connecting people, uplifting communities, protecting the planet, and advancing capabilities, Temasek Trust aims to build a better and brighter future for every generation.

This is part of our ongoing series on philanthropy and impact.

Stay tuned to learn more!