

ROOT DIAMONDS



Fas Lebbie

Founder

Carnegie Mellon University (Current)

Ph.D in Design

Parsons School of Design

MS Strategic Design & Management

Minor in Impact Entrepreneurship

University of Utah

BA International Studies

BS Entrepreneurship

We are led by our Founder Fas Lebbie, an entrepreneur & designer, who was born and raised in Sierra Leone before immigrating to America. He has the experience, education, and purpose to disrupt the natural resource category globally. Root Diamonds has a unique combination of knowledge and passion for the diamond industry with a deep understanding of branding and experiential retail.

Fas' character and identity as an African-American immigrant from Sierra Leone have greatly influenced his design & entrepreneurship practices. Fas' identity, communicated to the world through his memoir *Souvenirs of My Awakening*, has gifted him with a unique voice.

His work in human-centered design (HCD) and entrepreneurship as an undergraduate at the University of Utah earned him a scholarship at the Parsons School of Design. Through studying Trans-disciplinary Design, and majoring in both Strategic Design & Management and Impact Entrepreneurship, Fas learned how to take an ethical and entrepreneurial approach to design.

The heart of his professional work has been in Product and Interaction Design. He has developed products as an entrepreneur & Designer in the fintech industry, Big Data industry, nonprofit industry, and government agencies, as well as offered consulting for clients in the healthcare and social science spaces in the US.

Fas worked in the intersection between design and business where he leveraged UX research, lean startup methodologies, and Systems Thinking to create interventions. While gaining this background, Fas founded his first startup: Thought Cab Design Agency.

Fas already has an impressive professional and philanthropic background, using design for the betterment of the world. His non-profit, Fas Project, provides the basics for 4,000 African orphans while allowing them to show their creativity through skateboarding and surfing. Fas has shown his commitment to the next generation of creatives in the United States through mentoring younger entrepreneurs.

Most recently, Fas has shown his future-facing mindset, by using cutting-edge tools to advance design. As a Senior Product Designer at PTC, he worked in mixed reality spaces, leveraging VR, AR, and AI technology.

Fas aims to bring the voice of a designer and an ethicist in the natural resource space across the African landscape leveraging indigenous knowledge and appropriate technology as needed.

Currently a Teaching Fellow and Ph.D Student at Carnegie Mellon University, Fas' research aims at empowering local and natural resource ecosystems and designing sustainable product/service systems (S.PSS) - Specifically Distributed Natural Resources Systems, Conjuring African Pedagogy for Unthought educational Futures for global African Presence and exploring the complex relation between Design and AI in the emerging digital culture of the global south - specifically Africa; its design implementations as well as its implications.

ROOT DIAMONDS

FROM CSR TO ESG

CSR is becoming outdated and in its place, ESG is growing traction and respect. It is how we approach 'impact' at Root Diamonds. While it's often hard to measure the impact of CSR activities, ESG criteria make our business's efforts quantifiable across and between industries. ESG policies are criteria led and require that they be embedded in the core of our businesses strategy, rather than sidelined.

The power of ESG lies in its integration into our business and its momentum is being driven by our consumers and employees demanding transparent, purpose-led business practices that align with their priorities.



ENVIRONMENTAL

Root Diamonds is on a mission to produce higher quality jewelry in a better way— and sustainable production plays a big role in that. All of the natural resources we use come from clean mining and land reclamation projects, and our production model means that we only use the materials we need, eliminating waste to further reduce our impact on the environment. With the infrastructure in place, we can turn abandoned mine pits into pishing ponds and reclaim the soil through the planting of local wildlife and also create new mining standars in mining communities. In 2022, we will launch new packaging, which is FSC certified and uses wood, paper, and other forest products from well-managed forests and/or recycled sources.

SOCIAL

At Root Diamonds, transparency is key to everything we do; we throw back the curtains and invite our customers into the heart of the natural resource industry. Customers never need to wonder who mined and made their jewelry – they can see our supply chain in action for themselves when they take part in our high-end XR experiences and get connected to the person who mined their diamonds from the earth. We're also on a mission to share our knowledge and expertise with the next generation of African jewelry makers, which is why we are launching Root Studios to create training and employment opportunities for mining communities. Our social practices make up 1/2 of our sustainability pledge along with our environmental work.

GOVERNANCE

Social and environmental business practices are embedded into our overall governance procedures. One of Root Diamonds biggest hurdles is building infrastructure that successfully governs our sustainability efforts in America and Africa. Together, we have produced a clear roadmap to define our ESG goals and timelines, and communicate these both internally and externally. We have built realtionships with high-ranking people within the Sierra Leone government. We will know our governance works when our policies begin to impact the laws and governance of the countries we operate in. We are also aiming to achieve 100 percent compliance with our Workplace Ethics standards.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION



At Root Diamonds, our business is built around helping our customers express their true selves, and we're proud to say the same of our employees. We celebrate and advocate for an open, diverse, and inclusive working environment for all, and take great pride in our culture. We work in collaboration with our people to ensure that our culture is inclusive, respectful, and free from discrimination, harassment, and prejudice. This extends to promoting diversity and equality in all areas of recruitment, employment, training, and development.

We are proud of our commitment and efforts in striving towards true representation across our business. Our ongoing strategy will continue to focus on data collection, insight, and analysis and setting clear targets to track progression vs our commitments throughout the year.

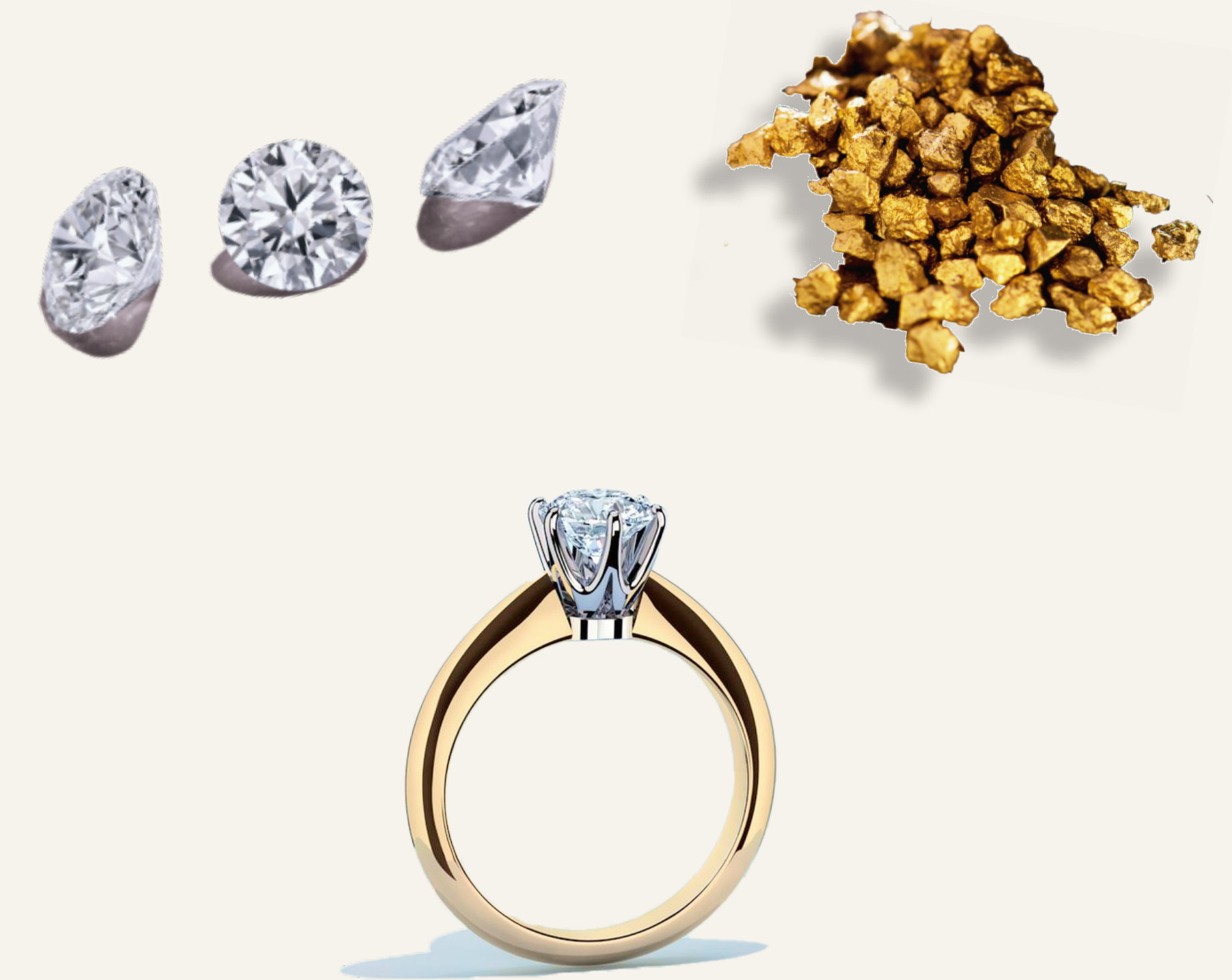
Ultimately, we are a values-led business, both internally and externally; and we champion all employees to foster the 'be yourself' core value. We respect and are proud that everyone is different and adds value in their unique way.

Root Diamonds aims to have 60% of its workforce be people of color.

ROOT STUDIOS INITIATIVE

2022 will see the launch of Root Studios. Root Studios is dedicated to teaching the youth in mining communities the skills necessary to have a successful career in today's global economy. We will teach youth in mining communities digital skills such as coding, web design, UX/UI design, and more. This initiative will bring a new workforce to the global economy and bring money back to these undeveloped nations

RESPONSIBLE SOURCING



All of the diamonds and gold used in Root Diamonds' products originate from Sierra Leone. Root Diamonds connects our customers to the people who mine these diamonds and gold to show how our products are responsibly sourced and mining communities benefit from our efforts.

THE RJC CODE OF PRACTICES



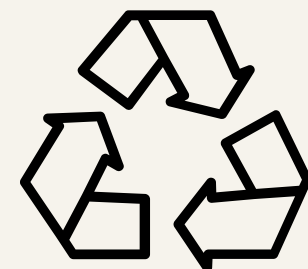
LEGAL AND REGULATORY
COMPLIANCE



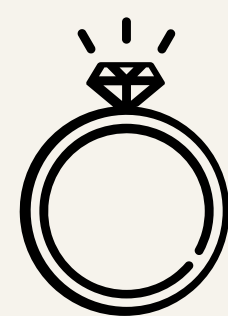
RESPONSIBLE SUPPLY CHAINS
AND HUMAN RIGHTS



LABOUR RIGHTS
AND WORKING CONDITIONS



HEALTH, SAFETY
AND ENVIRONMENT



GOLD, SILVER, PGM, DIAMOND
AND COLOURED GEMSTONE PRODUCTS

Responsible Jewelry Council



2023 will see Root Diamonds become an RJC Certified Member. The Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC) is the world's leading standard-setting organization for the jewellery and watch industry. Its Code of Practices provides a common standard for responsible business practices from the mines to retail, and aligns with key development frameworks, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ILO Principles, and UN Global Compact and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our 2022 COP (Code of Practices) certification showcases our commitment to sustainable and responsible business practices that adhere to RJC standards and is a precursor to full membership. Independently verified to build trust and confidence, the certification programme includes six key steps that are assessed by an RJC-accredited auditor to ensure maximum compliance. Detailed information on the RJC can be found online at www.responsiblejewellery.com.

LAND RECLAMATION

We believe that our mission of empowerment will fail if the communities we empower destroy their land in the process. From 2021 we will be following a three-phase approach:

PHASE 1:

We will make it clear with local governments and leaders that Root Diamonds only purchases resources from people who adhere to the mining guidelines established by Sierra Leone's government.

PHASE 2:

We will work with the people in mining communities to revive their land that has been destroyed by mining. This can mean revegetation to salvage the soil and create farmland or turning mining pits into fishing ponds.

PHASE 3:

We will conduct an annual land reclamation assessment by measuring the outcome of our collaborative efforts with the communities. This will enable us to adapt and evolve to best practices.

ROOT STUDIOS

Root Studios launches in 2022 and its purpose is to inspire, develop, and catalyze innovation through opportunity. We're creating an ecosystem of learning to support the full work lifecycle from early careers to leadership, by offering access to education for tech skills.

DEVELOPING THE TALENT OF TODAY

In the first phase, we are developing our current talent pools. Partnering with the Parsons School of Design, we have put together coursework that teaches skills for UX/UI design, web development, and impact strategy. In addition to those we also provide materials to our current employees regarding project management, data analytics, and communication. Every employee has access to these pieces of training and can request coursework for any other skill they wish to learn.

NURTURING THE TALENT OF TOMORROW

Root Studios' main purpose is to nurture the talent of tomorrow in Africa. We will teach the youth in the mining communities we operate in the skills necessary to thrive in today's global market. Skills include UX/UI design, web development, entrepreneurship, and many more. These young people that are trained and educated through Root Studios will be given opportunities to launch their careers with us and join our staff.