

The Practice of Democracy In Action

Our Work



Of The People The Truths WE Hold

Immersive Experience
Fellowship
The People's Studio Pop-Up

Of The People | The Truths WE Hold explores the values of Democracy told through the experiences and voices of the people stewarding its future. Participants engage historical through present-day themes like policies, practices, and economics, shaping how we experience democratic liberties and principles. Each interaction unearths the hopes and aspirations of democracy while investigating the generational contradictions to deliver its full potential for all.

This immersive platform looks at the relationship between the promises of democracy and how those promises transform into the ways in which democracy is defined through the places and spaces we navigate. Various engagement prompts invite participants to define ways where democratic rights and liberties are intentionally practiced to advance healing, equity, and justice.

Of the People | The Truths We Hold Component 1

FELLOWSHIP



Curriculum



Research and Design



Programming and Events

The People's Studio
Fellowship

Component 1: A 3-12 month opportunity for individuals to join the Of the People immersive experience and become embedded in local initiatives that drive social impact and innovation. This fellowship is designed to bring significant value to all participants. Fellows benefit by connecting to existing deeply embedded community work and contribute to a longer-term vision of neighborhood impact beyond the fellowship.

Each fellow is able to create a flexible, experiential pathway to social-purpose work and to make an immediate impact using the skills and experience they already have.

Of the People | The Truths We Hold Component 2

Immersive Experience



IMMERSION



UNCOVER



RE-IMAGINE

Immersive Experience

Component 2: The Of The People immersive experience is licensed as a tool to invite participants to learn the history, interact with the stories and invent a future of healing by addressing systemic inequities and challenges threatening democracy. The experience is comprised of four (4) sections Immersive digital experience captures themes of the exhibit and expands the engagement into identified neighborhoods, highlighting specific narratives and projects.

Of the People | The Truths We Hold Component 3

Programming



Programming

Component 3: Tailored programming focused on specific TPD themes or overall introduction to the experience. Programming also supports local organizations and academic institutions.

Of the People | The Truths We Hold Component 4

The People's Studio Pop-Up



The People's Studio Pop-Up

Pop-Up: A public studio pop-up to expand community dialog and explore projects shaping the conditions of the community. This work will capture and ground a continuing public engagement once the exhibit travels to another city.



the people's studio

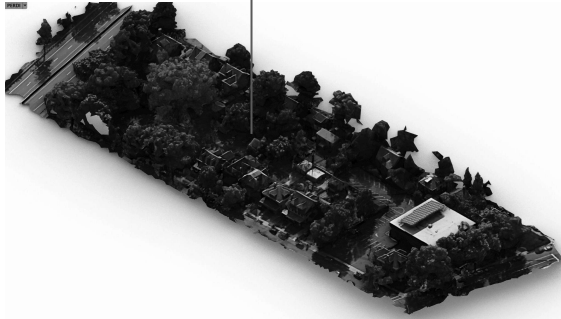
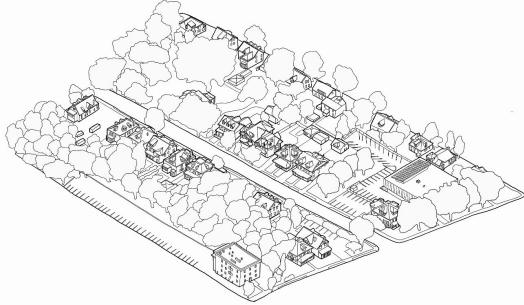
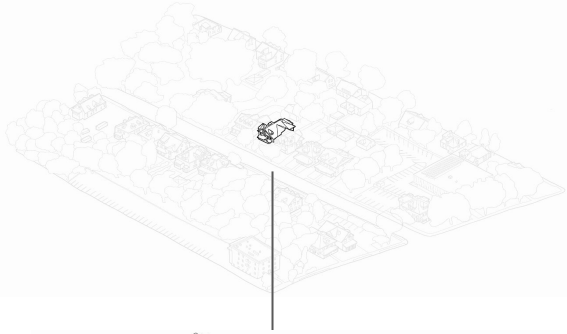
Public Engagement
Project Hub
Fellowship
Land Trust
Boutique Community Development

The People's Studio combines community development, community uses, and public engagement to create vibrant hubs that center the concept “of the people, by the people, for the people.” Each location is designed to promote creativity, collaboration, and innovation to support a range of cultural, social, and economic activities. A catalyst for economic development, local entrepreneurship, and community engagement, The People's Studio creates a strong anchor asset that advances shared value opportunities within communities.

The People's Studio is dedicated to supporting and uplifting innovators addressing society's most pressing challenges. Through the creation of hybrid spaces, The People's Studio helps to incubate local talent, prototype sustainable impact development models, promote entrepreneurship, and cultivate a cross-pollinating and supportive ecosystem of systems change thinkers. In addition to providing a platform for cultural programming and community development, The People's Studio also serves as a public engagement studio, providing a space for community members to come together and engage in dialogue, debate, and collaborative problem-solving. By combining events, workshops, and other community-focused initiatives, we partner with diverse stakeholders seeking innovative opportunities to invest in equitable and sustainable long term impact.

We currently are activating locations in various cities across the country.

vesi



Welcome to VESI, where we believe in the transformative power of placemaking and fostering neighborhood equity. Our multifaceted organization works with strategic partners to envision, create, and steward projects advocating for more equitable and just neighborhoods to positively impact the social determinants of health. Through placemaking, we aim to shape vibrant and inclusive spaces that promote social connections and individual well-being, harnessing the assets and potential of local communities.

VESI is a 501(c)(3) ecosystem where localized knowledge and projects connect neighbors, institutions and professionals. As a community anchor VESI serves as an infrastructure for generating community-driven social, cultural and economic development. The main activities of VESI are an infrastructure democracy real estate investment trust (REIT), a neighborhood equity fund, and a community development and public engagement research studio where we learn about shared histories, new systems and from one another.

VESI will manage long-term social impact investment fund to acquire and restore properties from rural to urban communities. The fund will identify and invest in restorative projects advancing healing and an infrastructure reflective of democratic values like equity, and justice. This investment fund will build off a “pay it forward” equity model as a strategy for challenges like disinvestment, displacement and gentrification. For each restorative project, the fund invests in, a portion of the equity value increase will go back to the fund to support the other projects not able to access traditional financial tools.

With these tools in place, coupled with shared knowledge as a foundation, we can begin to design, develop, and invest in communities from the ground up. VESI brings experts and capacity partners to the table, from lawyers to architects, and vets investment-ready projects that can be connected with resources like social impact investment.

Join us in shaping public spaces that celebrate diversity, promote well-being, and build stronger, more inclusive communities. Your support helps us continue our placemaking efforts and expand the reach and impact of the Neighborhood Equity Fund. Together, let's create lasting positive change, one neighborhood at a time. Again, welcome to VESI where placemaking and neighborhood equity meet.



Today, more of us disagree with how the social contract of democracy is showing up in our lives and communities. The needs of the people are grossly falling short- highlighting deep fractures that directly contradict democratic values and chisel away at hope for a more perfect union.

When we hear words like freedom, equality, and justice for all, it is imperative to make those democratic values real and something each of us can feel, touch and access. That life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are in fact unalienable rights to be enjoyed by this global citizenry of Democracy.

Living Room Talks brings together people from all different backgrounds- asking of each other, how can we rise up together to amplify democratic values through service, action, and practice. AND NOT just when it's time to rock the vote.

Join us along with diverse guests in living room talks across America identifying and supporting the many ways we can move beyond rhetorical nods, symbolic gestures, and empty promises of democracy... to a spatial practice of its very values, liberties and rights.

Our first living room talk launched from Trenton, New Jersey, on April 30, 2023.

[Click Here](#) to Learn More

To Learn More About Our Projects or Explore Opportunities To Collaborate:

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We'd Love to Hear From You!