



Democracy is . . . explores the meaning of democracy through the voices and lived experiences of the people stewarding its legacy. 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.

Participants engage in a curated past to present timeline immersed in the stories and conditions shaping the practice of democratic values and principles.

Each interactive engagement is an invitation to unearth the hopes and aspirations of democracy while investigating the generational contradictions and hindrances to its ability to deliver its full potential for all.

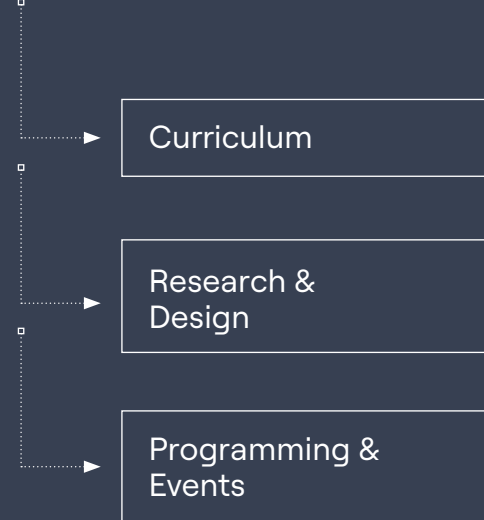
Featured Project— Democracy is . . .

Democracy is . . . is an immersive experience. In addition to a physical exhibit, digital activations, programming, and participatory design sessions support a more robust connection to the content and themes represented. Both during and after the engagement, participants gain a deeper understanding of the plurality of democracy through visualizing, discussing, and doing.

Our preview campaign will launch in September 2023, at the National Building Museum in Washington D.C. From there we are activating various engagements across the country exploring what democracy means to each of us and how we experience the values and promises it inspires on our blocks, in our neighborhoods, and in society.

The full installation of Democracy is.. will launch in the summer of 2024.

Democracy is... Fellowship



— Local engagement is a critical component of this experience. As part of the immersive experience, Democracy is... offers a fellowship with a stipend. We invite local stakeholders to participate in the immersive experience as fellows.

Fellowships can have 5 to 7 individuals with various experiences and skills.

Exhibit & Digital Experience



— The Democracy is . . . exhibit 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. There are two options for the exhibition, a pop-up and a customizable full installation.

Immersive digital experience captures themes of the exhibit and expands the engagement.

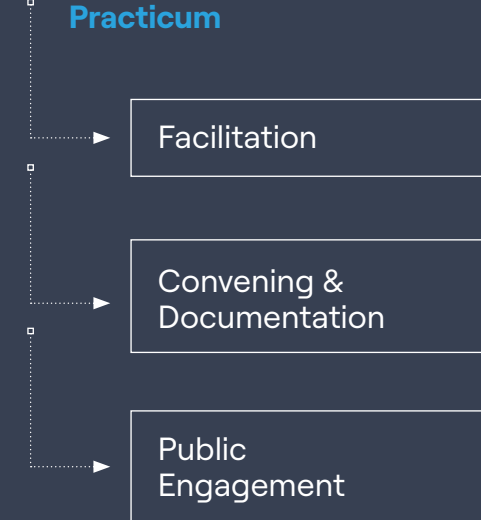
Programming & Activation



— Tailored programming is focused on specific Democracy is . . . themes or overall introduction to the experience.

Programming also supports local organizations and academic institutions.

The People's Studio Practicum



— A public studio pop-up expands community dialogue and explores projects shaping the conditions of the community.

This work captures and grounds a continuing public engagement once the exhibit travels to another city.

Featured Project— Democracy is . . .

The Democracy is . . . exhibit 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.

* Exhibit Space Requirements:
38 - 90 Linear Feet

Exhibit & Digital Experience

Exhibit

Digital Experience



Featured Project— Democracy is . . .

Custom events and activations leverage the richness and various media of materials to invite visitors to look beyond the exhibit location and observe physical places nearby that demonstrate a spatial practice and highlight the exhibition's themes in an experiential way.

Programming & Activation

Custom Activations

Tours, Programming, & Events

Lectures & Workshops



The content of the Democracy is . . . immersive experience is organized in 4 sections to accompany the viewer through a logical progression.



Section 1—Of The People

Section Description:

This section introduces the exhibition. We display historical quotes, definitions, and media in addition to crowdsourced personal definitions of democracy. The content also offers an interactive element prompting guests to answer a series of questions about how democracy shows up in their lives.

Components:

- Introduction
- Content exploring “democracy”
- Prompts/questions for guests
- Interactive programming

Goal:

Introduce guests to the exhibition topic, then expose them to a multitude of ways democracy as a term and a “promise” plays a role in their lives. We want to encourage people to see it as more than an empty promise or symbol. We also want to introduce the idea of democracy showing up in the built environment and being “spatialized.”

Sample prompts

- [How do you relate to democracy?](#)
- [What does democracy look like?](#)
- [Does democracy show up in your life?](#)
- [How do you define democracy?](#)
- [Do you see democracy in action in your day-to-day?](#)
- [What spaces and places are a threat to our democracy?](#)

Section 2—We Hold These Truths

Section Description:

We begin this section by introducing key concepts from history, grounding understanding of democratic rights and values. These themes are defined and help us decode and explore:

1. Key universal concepts of democratic values centered on rights and liberties originating from diverse cultures
2. A past to present understanding of both an American and a universal practice of democratic values and principles., weaving the infractions, contradictions, and hope for this global experiment of rights and liberties.
3. Provocations of historical and present day occurrences to activate dialogue and questioning of how inequities and injustices become systematized, eroding the hope for democracy.
4. Moments of activism and stewardship of democratic values demonstrating the full potential of democracy

Each city offers an opportunity to weave local experiences and narratives into this overarching framework by displaying key moments in the socio-spatial history of the themes of the timeline.

Components:

- Introduction to section
- Introduction to themes and terms
- Timeline and layered visuals
- Local maps and stories case
- Framework of what dictates how we experience democracy: Perceptions/Mental Models; Relationships/Connections/Power Dynamics; Practices/Policies/Investments
- Prompts and questions

Goal:

Participants will be able to contextualize how democratic values have been accessed and experienced over time, interrogating concepts of legacies of dehumanization, inequity, injustice, alongside instances where democracy becomes a beacon of hope.

Sample prompts

- [What story stands out to you the most?](#)
- [What story feels like it threatens our idea of democracy?](#)
- [How does inequity reveal itself in the built environment today?](#)

Section 2A—A View from the Block

Section Description:

“A View from the Block” section is a site specific immersion of Democracy is . . . developed in partnership with local organizations. From a localized perspective, questions, discussions, and investigations help explore the practice of democracy.

Components:

- Introduction to section:
 - Site-specific content and stories
- Prompts and questions

Goal:

This section offers guests an opportunity to reflect on the place they are physically standing in. They are encouraged to engaged in the history as well as use the themes introduced in Section 2 as a lens to approach this section. Using “vignettes” we introduce text and media (images, audio, diagrams) for guests to glance at or deep dive into. This local section in particular is where oral histories are accessible for guests to experience.

Sample prompts

- [What story stands out to you the most?](#)
- [What story feels like it threatens our idea of democracy?](#)
- [How does inequity reveal itself in the built environment today?](#)

Democracy is . . .

Content for this experience is organized in 4 sections and accompanies the viewer through a logical progression.

Section 2B— Customized Experience Standard Display: In 100 Days

Section Description:

Section 2B is a customized section to visualize and narrate additional histories, client's organizational work and projects. This could include an organization's history and work, a topic like health or education, a particular policy, or even an analysis of the current political climate and themes present within the immersive experience. It is an opportunity to highlight democracy in action.

Our current campaign is featuring "100 Days" as part of this section which highlights the first 100 days (March 9–June 16, 1933) of the policies, practices, and investments of the New Deal. This section explores the practice of democracy through the various initiatives and programs of the New Deal featured in the Democracy Redlined component detailing the radical transformation on the social and spatial footprint of America in ways we continue to be impacted by today.

Components:

- Introduction to section: Content and stories
- Prompts and questions

Goal:

Explore federal policies and infrastructure investments during the 20th century that continue to shape the social and spatial landscape of society. Learn how such policies created the American middle class and intergenerational wealth for some, while undemocratically deepening structural and generational inequity for others. In this section participants also learn about the generational systemic consequences of such policies. Participants are engaged in opportunities to undo the impact of these

Sample prompts

- How have past decisions truly affected our perception, expectation and experience of democracy?
- Is there infrastructure in your city that centers justice or equity?

Section 4—In Pursuit of Life, Liberty, and Happiness

Section Description:

The ideologies and principles of democracy in practice form a connective thread between all of us. In this section we encourage each of us to see ourselves as practitioners of what we value in democracy. We also introduce the 3 P's framework: pedagogy, process, practice as tools to improve how we can move from a vision of democracy to actionable opportunities to actualize democratic values in our neighborhoods and daily lives.

Section 4 also highlights local and other examples throughout the world where we imagine new systems, spaces, connections and ways of being that are both practically needed and expressive of our shared humanity. Democracy is . . . is an outcome of our intentions and we hope that this section can inspire everyone to see themselves as a spatial practitioner of democracy.

Components:

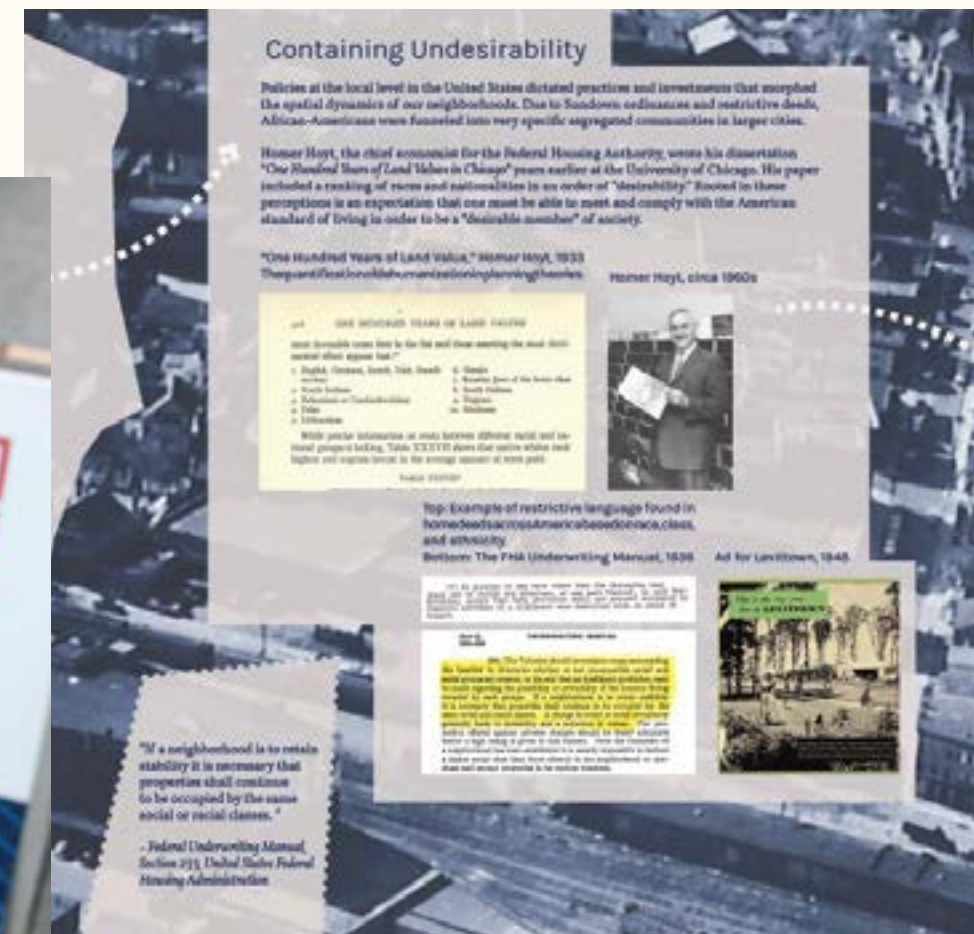
- Introduction to section
- 3 P's Framework: pedagogy, process, practice
- A variety of projects demonstrating how the 3P's framework privileges healing over harm, equity over inequity, and justice above injustice.
- Prompts and questions

Goal:

We encourage guests to reflect on how to ensure values of democracy (e.g. healing, equity, justice, etc...) are present in their lives and the lives of others. Share examples and models in order to inspire viewers. What does it mean to be a "doer of democracy"?

Sample prompts

- How can you become a "doer of democracy"?
- What does it look like to steward justice, equity, and healing?
- What will it be like when we succeed at reshaping our relationship to space and democracy's role in that?
- What are you passionate about in your community?



Expanded Scope—Digital and Trail Experience

Section Description:

In partnership with Carnevale, the expanded experience enhances a spatial narrative by highlighting site specific stories that further elaborate on the concepts and topics within Section 2. These stories are located within a defined mapped boundary and can be represented both digitally and physically. Each experience relates to unearthing erased stories of place of how our built environment has been crafted, informed, and influenced by the themes of the exhibit, and vice-versa.

Components:

- Trail marker with stories
- Digital experience

Goal:

Invite visitors to look beyond the exhibit location and observe physical places nearby that demonstrate a spatial practice and highlights the intersection of where the themes highlighted in Democracy is... have taken place.



By hosting *Democracy is...* you cultivate an immersive and interactive experience for diverse audiences to identify and support 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.

Why Activate Democracy is...?

Democracy is... is a national campaign exploring how democratic values rooted in words like We the People, truth, justice, and equity show up in practice within our minds and our physical spaces like our neighborhoods and cities. Told through the voices Of the People, this immersive campaign investigates and interrogates the relationship between the promises of democracy and how those promises are defined through the places we live and spaces we navigate.

We stand at a pivotal crossroads of democracy, worldwide stability, and our individual dreams and aspirations for a better future. In what ways can each of us who purport to pledge allegiance and honor these principles become practitioners of democracy? Whose responsibility is it to shepherd the promises of equity, justice, and healing it embodies?

In our shared pursuit of Democracy, there is a collective ask to move past the entrenchment of inequity activating a practice of democratic values that privileges healing over harm, equity over inequity, and justice above injustice. Through a shared belief in equality and freedom, how can we cultivate opportunities in our spaces, cities and world to realize the full potential of democracy?

It is within this context we invite you to become a part of an intentional network of practitioners preserving the future of this great experiment of democracy in order to build a more perfect, just and equitable union.

Objectives

- Demonstrate the connections between how we plan, design, and decide outputs within the environment and systems we create impacts the lived experience of neighborhoods and individuals.
- Co-generate ideas for alternative approaches and frameworks to address some of the most pressing issues impacting our communities
- Activate a stimulating immersive experience for visitors to develop a deeper understanding of democratic values and how those values are accessed is deeply influenced by policies, practices, and investments.



Opportunities

Below is an outline of services and activations we can offer to support your vision and objectives in bringing the Democracy is... immersive experience to your city.

Activating Democracy is... Options

IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE | VIRTUAL PRESENTATIONS

Democracy is...Virtual Presentation and Discussion

Duration: 1 hour with a half-hour Q&A.
Capacity: Unlimited

Workshop

Explore systems thinking and design frameworks represented in the *Democracy is...*immersive experience. This includes a deeper immersion into the identified themes represented in the exhibition.

Duration: 2 hours
Capacity: 100 Max

PRESENTATIONS, WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS & COURSES | IN-PERSON

Workshop

Explore systems thinking and design frameworks represented in the *Democracy is...*immersive experience. This includes a deeper immersion into the identified themes represented in the exhibition.

Duration: 2 hours
Capacity: 100 Max

Presentation

Through the lens of a case study city, navigate through the transformation of race, place and class to understand in what ways perceptions, power dynamics, policies, practices, and investments create a lived experience within the built environment.

Duration: 1 hour with a half-hour Q & A
Capacity: 100 Max

Seminar

Facilitation of a 6 -module seminar. Participants will explore a city and site-specific project. Each module will be custom-tailored to cover a specific theme or topic navigating the project through a past to present contextualized understanding, both locally and beyond, of the complex systems and themes informing the built environment where the project and its desired outcomes will be situated. The seminar can also serve as a precursor to fellowship opportunities for participants.

Duration: 12 weeks
Capacity: 30 Max

34 / 35

Activating Democracy is... Options

IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE

Consultation

The Practice of Democracy (PoD) consults with client to support planning the *Democracy is...* experience. This includes one to two (1-2) site visits to determine location to activate *Democracy is...*, meet with necessary stakeholders, outline programming and coordinate other logistics. In addition, The PoD provides a promotional packet to client to use to promote the experience. Any design changes to the promotional packet can be done for an additional cost.

*Does not include travel or lodging

Core Engagement Scope *Democracy is...*

Production and installation

PoD will edit and design materials from the pre-exhibit research conducted with fellowship and PoD research team. After content is finalized and edited, visualizations are designed. PoD will transport, install, and uninstall the exhibit. The exhibit should be installed within one week prior to the exhibit launch, with the uninstall of the completed on the following day after the exhibit ends on date to be determined with team members. At least one assistant or location point person should be present in each instance.

Training and programming

PoD will provide 2 tour guide training sessions with youth ambassador team and other selected participants for Democracy is... PoD will participate in 1 programmed event (tours, speaking engagement, panel discussion) to be determined in conjunction with the team). Tour schedules vary and depend on group size and length of exhibit engagement.

Digital experience

In partnership with Carnevale, the expanded experience enhances a spatial narrative by highlighting site specific stories that further elaborate on the concepts and topics within Section 2.these stories are located within a defined mapped boundary and can be represented both digitally and physically.

**Does not include travel or lodging. Price quoted is for *Democracy is...* engagements for up to 3 months. Additional monthly licensing fee will be negotiated should the engagement extend beyond the contracted time.

Below is an outline of services and activations we can offer to support your vision and objectives.

Conference, Event or Short Term Pop-Up

Installation of the existing versions and research can be utilized as the local content, lasting up to a week. This includes four guided tours of the exhibit and/or presentations.

*Does not include travel or lodging

Activating Democracy is... Options for Expanded Scope

ADDITIONAL SCOPE

Customized Sections

Production of additional customized sections to visualize and narrate additional histories, client's organizational work and local community projects, or socio-political dynamics. This could include an organization's history and work, a topic like health or education, a particular policy, or even an analysis of the current political climate and themes present within the exhibition. Please inquire for additional information and examples.

*Price dependent on scope of work.

Living Room Talks

On April 30th, we successfully launched our inaugural Living Room Talks event in Trenton, New Jersey, near the historic site of the Battle of Trenton, a pivotal moment in American history. This launch marked the beginning of a nationwide campaign designed to stimulate conversations in various neighborhoods across the United States.

Living Room Talks represents an opportunity for individuals from diverse backgrounds to come together, engage in meaningful dialogue, and contribute to the strengthening of our democratic foundation while learning about how to make democracy a verb. Each talk is filmed in either a real or staged "living room."

The value of each talk is to activate a shared commitment to preserving and enhancing the future of democracy by fostering a more perfect, just, and equitable union.

Additional Programming

Additional guided tours of the immersive experience, as well as training for the hosting organization and others to lead tours. We will offer students, volunteers and others the tools to spread this conversation broadly, bringing larger community networks to the table. There is also opportunities to have a member from our team participate in additional programming, including panel discussions, video screenings, workshops or other programming.

Additional Opportunities to Support:

There are numerous ways to support in our efforts. Whether through funding, networking, or hosting the immersive experience. Each opportunity connects you to other "doers" of democracy and projects actualizing the rhetoric of "We The People."

Your support empowers:

- the full immersive experience of "Democracy is..." launching summer of 2024
- hosting "living room" talks in different neighborhoods across the country
- production of a media collective documenting oral histories, conditions of neighborhoods and the impact of each project we activate in addressing systemic inequity
- raising capital to support the creation of a national neighborhood equity trust focused on advancing new opportunities in sectors like housing, education, economic development, and health through community land acquisition, communal wealth building, cultural hubs, and restorative justice and equitable development projects



Our work is multi-faceted and inclusive by design. As we continue to seek new partners and craft new collaborations, our learning and processes evolve.

Joining forces with us comes with flexibility as well as established frameworks to ground the work

- 1. We assess all design and project decisions through an equity lens assessment tool**, ensure that a historic understanding of inequity is present in decision making spaces before decisions are made, and return to reflection sessions and trainings on equity issues from the personal to the societal on a regular basis.
- 2. We ensure different voices and experiences are heard and recorded** in a "Living Archive" that can be openly accessed and added to in various design processes, assess the process of design decision making through a democratic lens for each project, and assign independent mediators to projects and organizations who regularly check-in and assist in conflict resolution.
- 3. Our investment-ready local projects and ventures** can be assessed on a triple bottom line basis, ensure 75% or more of livelihoods connected to these initiatives are local residents, and connect a percentage of returns to investing in the development of new initiatives.

All across the world people are demonstrating that, through innovation, collaboration, and action, each of us can make a positive contribution in making our world a more just and vibrant place.

We are here to support and help co-create the bold ideas that will bring us closer to the experience of democracy.



Get in touch.

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