

AN ACT OF COLLECTIVE IMAGINATION THE USDAC'S FIRST TWO YEARS OF ACTION RESEARCH

WELCOME!

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am BIG



BY ARLENE GOLDBARD
CHIEF POLICY WONK

USDAC.US



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This section offers a brief summary of the six main sections of this report.

CHIEF POLICY WONK'S INTRODUCTION: THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN CULTURE. As a national action network mobilizing creativity for social justice, the USDAC exists to spark a grassroots, creative change movement, engaging millions in envisioning and enacting a world rooted in empathy, equity, and social imagination. This section frames our key ideas concerning the public interest in culture.

As the USDAC has grown and spread, our message of cultural democracy has been eagerly embraced. People instantly grasp the public interest in culture and avidly wish to pursue it. They just don't share the lingo that says this is cultural policy. When planners' decisions affect cultural fabric, when government denies cultural citizenship to those who lack legal papers—for example—they are making cultural policy. Everyone has a right to a voice in this critical policymaking realm.

The public interest in culture is vast, but here in the United States, too many of the containers created to hold it have been inadequate to the task. The urgent need now is to turn things around, adopting policies and initiatives that embody the public interest in culture.

We must begin by asking what the public interest in culture is. The USDAC's [Statement of Values](#) offers one powerful set of parameters. We pursue them by linking the local to the national, generating a constant flow of information and energy between the two.

ENGAGING COMMUNITY VISIONS. Rather than study culture at a distance, the USDAC employs an action research approach, engaging community members in arts-based activities that elicit their visions of a future shaped by the transformative power of art and culture. Local initiatives focus on [Imaginings](#) (arts-infused community dialogues), and [Field Offices](#) (USDAC outposts established in communities that have hosted Imaginings). National Actions invite individuals and groups everywhere to take part in a time-bound set of activities focused on specific themes.

This section summarizes accomplishments since the first call for volunteer Cultural Agents went out in March 2014, including 23 Imaginings across the U.S. and our first major National Action, the [People's State of the Union 2015](#). More than 7,000 people have participated in USDAC gatherings.

DISTILLING KNOWLEDGE. The USDAC's work is based on seeing people in all dimensions as individuals and communities and thus offering holistic responses to social conditions. The community members' dreams, stories, and other creations contributed through USDAC initiatives are fundamentally cultural, calling for cultural responses. This section summarizes what we have learned thus far from participants' contributions, organized by the most popular topics: Community and Belonging; Racial and Cultural Equity, Inclusion, and Justice; Displacement and Placekeeping; Migration and Immigration; Education and Youth; Macroeconomy and Creative Economy; Environment and Climate. First-person testimonies from the People's State of the Union 2015 bring the issues to life.

GENERATIVE POLICY IDEAS. In 2016, after multiple rounds of Imaginings and National Actions, the USDAC will launch its first official policy platform, a compendium of proposals for policies and initiatives that can significantly advance cultural democracy: pluralism, equity, and collaborative creativity in support of social justice and social inclusion.

This section provides six specific policy ideas to address the needs and aspirations summarized in the previous section: Bureau of Cultural Citizenship; Rapid Artistic Response; Cultural Impact Study; Bureau of Teaching Artistry; Basic Income Grant; and EcoArts Fund.

PAYING FOR CHANGE. Rejecting the specious argument that the United States can't afford investment in cultural development, this section offers a range of alternative modes of investment including an advertising tax, a Robin Hood tax, and increasing effectiveness by redeploying existing allocations to address unemployment and stimulate both economic and cultural development through creative community-building initiatives.

1. CHIEF POLICY WONK'S INTRODUCTION: THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN CULTURE



The U.S. Department of Arts and Culture is a national action network mobilizing creativity for social justice. Organizing artists, cultural workers, and other community members both locally and nationally, the USDAC exists to spark a grassroots, creative change movement, engaging millions in envisioning and enacting a world rooted in empathy, equity, and social imagination.

We often say this people-powered department isn't an outside agency coming in: it's our inside agency coming out. We work with people across the country to envision their communities transformed by the power of art and culture and to share what they see. We ask them to dream together of a future in which full cultural citizenship is a reality: where all of us feel welcome in our own communities; where we appreciate that all of us weave the social fabric that binds us as a people; and where these feelings are embodied in every aspect of our communities and institutions, public and private. This collective vision is being crafted into exciting, accessible proposals for new policies and initiatives to put it into practice, especially ideas with local impact and immediate local relevance. This is our first public report on this process.

As the USDAC has grown and spread, we've seen how eagerly our message of cultural democracy is embraced in small towns and big cities, by people of every age, social condition, orientation, and heritage. People instantly grasp the public interest in culture, and avidly wish to pursue it.

I'm not surprised. For years, I've been conducting an informal research project. I ask strangers—people I meet in waiting-rooms and on public transit—if they care about things like how their communities are depicted on TV, how their cultures are taught in school, and whether their children are offered classes in theater and music along with math and science. So far, the response has been unanimous: Yes, I care!

Then I ask if they care about cultural policy. The most frequent responses are a look of puzzlement or an indifferent shrug.

The thing is, the first response cancels the second. Both questions are one and the same.

People care greatly how they are represented, how their surroundings and society embody—or reject—their heritage, whether or not they feel a deep sense of belonging, and how

those things are expressed in the sounds, images, and experiences human beings create. As in every social realm, the conditions that determine these things are created by countless individual and collective actions, and also shaped by laws, regulations, articulations of value, by investment and disinvestment—in short, by policy.



Yet except for aficionados, the phrase “cultural policy” conjures something so dry, obscure, and removed from daily life that the two questions may seem to have no connection.

In reality, everyone makes cultural policy.

- When a local planning commission approves the destruction of a longstanding Latino neighborhood for the construction of a new freeway or sports stadium, cultural policy is being made, policy that prizes revenue while devaluing cultural fabric woven over decades of family and community life.
- When a state government denies undocumented workers the right to an education, a driver's license, and other signifiers of belonging, it is making cultural policy, withdrawing full cultural citizenship from those who lack legal papers.
- When parents and teachers introduce students to heritage cultures through classes and holiday celebrations sharing

music, stories, and food, schools are making cultural policy, prioritizing the school's commitment to cultural competency.

- When music venues ban hoodies, they are making cultural policy, establishing who is welcome to take part in local cultural life—and who is not.

To every reader of this report, I say this: you have an absolute right to a voice in this critical policymaking realm. As is revealed by my informal research project and in the action-research the USDAC has been conducting for the last several years, the major challenge to the fulfillment of that right is reframing cultural policy in terms of broad public interest, rather than the way it is most often seen, as a special-interest topic primarily of interest to direct beneficiaries.

The clearest expression shows up in advocacy. Which is more likely to draw support: a plea by artists and arts administrators for their own funding, or making the case for a public interest in culture that engages and benefits everyone? “Support the arts” or “Culture powers community”? If the messages arts advocates’ have been using truly resonated with all the people who care about how they are depicted in mass media or what their kids are taught about their heritage, the real value of the National Endowment for the Arts’ budget (to pick just one example) would not have declined by well over half since 1980.

The public interest in culture is vast, but here in the United States, too many of the containers created to hold it have been inadequate to the task. Instead of engaging great questions of meaning and conviviality, of cultural citizenship and cultural democracy, attention has gone to incidentals. Most domestic cultural policy studies focus on quantification of what is (e.g., audience studies and expenditure analyses) rather than proposing and enacting what could be.

The urgent need now is to things turn around, adopting policies and initiatives that embody the public interest in culture. We must begin by asking what that is.

WHAT IS THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN CULTURE?

When the United Nations issued the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the right to culture was included. From Article 27: “Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community.”

The USDAC’s Statement of Values, adopted at the people-powered department’s founding, declares that “It is our sacred duty to remove impediments to the exercise of this right and to ensure that the means to exercise this right are available to all. In a cultural democracy, we are obliged to monitor the impact of public and private actions with these duties in mind.”

Imagine a society in which the right to culture is fully expressed, reflected in communities and institutions, and universally accessible. This is what thousands of Americans have been invited to do through the USDAC’s Imaginings—art-infused community dialogues—and National Actions (such as the People’s State of the Union and the upcoming #DareToImagine, which enact the right to culture). Their visions have shown us that the public interest in culture is compelling and encompassing. What we’ve learned from them—and how we can act on that—makes up the bulk of this report.

It is in the public interest to know each other, connecting across our differences and respecting each other for our contributions to a vital and diverse democracy. Therefore, our Statement of Values asserts that:

Culture is created by everyone. The art, customs, creative expressions, and social fabric of every community and heritage contribute to the vibrancy and dynamism of our common culture. Our cultural institutions and policies should reflect this, rather than privileging favorites.

In a period marked by blatant racial injustice, gender discrimination, and other invidious inequities, imagining the full realization of the right to culture reminds us that it is in the public interest not only to value diversity but to commit to true equity. Therefore, our Statement of Values asserts that:

Cultural diversity is a social good and the wellspring of free expression. Its support and protection require equitable distribution of public resources, particularly to correct past injustices and balance an excess of commercialization. Cultural equity means full inclusion, participation, and power-sharing in all of our communities and institutions.

As the polarization of wealth distorts social and power relations in our society, envisioning the unimpeded exercise



of the right to culture generates the call for a social order that rejects entrenched privilege in favor of fairness and balance. Therefore, our Statement of Values asserts that:

Culture is the sum-total of public, private, individual, and collective action. We seek balance so that no sector dominates or controls cultural expression or access to cultural resources. We advocate an arts ecology in which all sectors work together to support cultural development for the benefit of all.

As budgets for social goods have been redirected to corporate subsidy, incarceration, and militarization, our cultural fabric frays. It becomes harder to sustain our collective tasks of communicating, planning, and collaborating in creating a truly livable, equitable, and just future. We need a creative, participatory approach, which is why our Statement of Values asserts that:

The work of artists is a powerful resource for community development, education, healthcare, protection of our commonwealth, and other democratic public purposes. Indeed, artists' skills of observation, improvisation, innovation, resourcefulness, and creativity enhance all human activity. We advocate complete integration of arts-based learning in public and private education at all levels. We advocate public service employment for artists and other creative workers as a way to accomplish social good, address unemployment, and strengthen social fabric. We support artists who place their gifts at the service of community, equity, and social change.

Understanding the public interest in culture is important but not sufficient. We also must know how to act on it.

HOW CAN WE PURSUE THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN CULTURE?

The spirit of the times is an ally for everyone who asserts the broad public interest in culture. Culture's importance is emerging into awareness. Replacing the old idea that relegated culture to the optional column—nice for those who like it, but not very important—is a dawning understanding that culture is the crucible in which we forge the future. The stories we tell ourselves about what is possible shape real-life possibility. They are reflected in movies, plays, and TV programs, in the music we choose, in the videos and images we post to social media, in the poems and parables we pass to our friends. When we accept a dystopian future story, abandoning hope becomes inevitable. But when we craft a new story, drawing on our ancestors' resilience to spark future renewal, we kindle hope grounded in reality.

One of the USDAC's foundational principles is to link the local and national, generating a constant flow of information and energy in both directions. We need cultural policy that reflects the true nature of our urgent need for a new story. It must emerge from broad public engagement, grounding it in people's concerns and aspirations, in lived knowledge rather than abstract or distanced expertise. We need to understand community-envisioned cultural policy as an instrument of community-directed development rather than something imposed on communities.

This understanding is derived in part from past artist-driven movements. For many decades, from the American Artists Congress of the thirties to the Art Workers Coalitions of the early seventies to the USDAC today, artists have been moved to apply their core capacities—imagination, resourcefulness, innovation, empathy, meaning-making—to social change.

This history of artist-led movements is punctuated with amazing opportunities, vibrant ventures, and ultimately, unsustainable successes. Movements have arisen, gained attention, made a certain impact, and petered out when energy and conditions changed. The USDAC's working hypothesis is that earlier movements offered no clear pathway to scale up local efforts into a national coalition that could engage the most encompassing issues; and their dominant forms of participation tended to copy conventional activism, rather than enlisting creative innovation in the service of social justice.

Extrapolating from this prior experience, the USDAC is simultaneously an art project and a movement that seeks to change our national conversation about art and culture. It links local organizing with national policy and action, each shaping the other. In short, we pursue the public interest in art using methods that foreshadow the future we hope to help bring about: creative, inclusive, vibrant, sustainable.

As we exhort participants in [#DareToImagine](#): join us in daring to live the future now!



2. ENGAGING COMMUNITY VISIONS



Rather than study culture at a distance, the USDAC employs an action research approach, learning by doing. We engage community members in arts-based activities that elicit their visions of a future shaped by the transformative power of art and culture. Local initiatives focus on Imaginings (arts-infused community dialogues), and Field Offices (USDAC outposts established in communities that have hosted Imaginings). National Actions invite individuals and groups everywhere to take part in a time-bound set of activities focused on specific themes. Both are described in this section.

IMAGININGS AND FIELD OFFICES

In March 2014, the USDAC put out the first nationwide call for a dozen volunteer **Cultural Agents**. Cultural Agents organize in their own communities, and each cohort of 12-18 Agents learns together, offers mutual support, and engages their communities in the larger national conversation our National Actions inspire, cultivating the empathy and imagination we need to create a future we wish to inhabit.

Nearly 100 remarkably enthusiastic and well-qualified candidates applied to carry out the first mission of enacting the USDAC at a local level by organizing and hosting Imaginings. The second call, in November 2014, prompted almost as many applications.

What lesson do we draw from this response? There are a great many artist-activists who wish to play catalytic roles in developing and sustaining local cultural life, especially in cultural development that advances social justice. They are eager to connect with others who share their aims and values, to learn from each other, sharpen their skills, and multiply the impact of their work.

To prepare for Imaginings, each Cultural Agent brings together a team of **Citizen Artists** to engage a diverse cross-section of neighbors in the local Imagining. Using a variety of art-based methods, Imagining participants envision their towns and cities 20 years from now, when the power of art and culture to renew meaning and weave social fabric has been fully integrated into every aspect of community life. They then identify steps toward realizing their visions, harnessing creative talent and local cultural resources.

A third call for Cultural Agents will be issued in November 2015. Here are some examples from the first two rounds of Imaginings:

IMAGINING GERMANTOWN, led by Cultural Agent (and now USDAC Rhapsodist of Wherewithal) Yolanda Wisher in July 2014, was inspired by Thelonious Monk's composition, "Round Midnight." **Maleka Fruean's account** begins this way:

The full moon was out. The ghosts of Sun-Ra and Rufus Harley were floating through the air. At exactly midnight on Saturday, July 12, 2014, folks from all over Philadelphia arrived at the Soup Factory Studio in the Germantown neighborhood ready for a journey via collective imagination to envision our community in twenty years, infused with arts and culture.

Participants created an interactive mural, shared their visions in a video booth, scribes recorded discussions and shared them back as poetry. "Two in the morning felt like two in the afternoon," wrote Fruean:

The energy was pulsating throughout the room. Clouds of thought were palpable as the imagined landscapes of our future world were in sight. Visions included: solar energy, flowers everywhere, a sustainable town environment, paying artists for their work, communal housing, free transportation, and brunch. Ideas began to overlap. Everyone began to see and feel the possibility of their future visions. As groups reported back, the crowd came up with more ways to activate our neighborhood. Local artists going into daycares and providing art programs. Sustainable ways of keeping this momentum going. It all seemed viable.

IMAGINING BAY AREA, led by Cultural Agent Beth Grossman on July 13, 2014, set itself in the future, looking back:

All participants are citizen journalists and have assembled to create the first issue of The Imagining Times. We have a three-hour press deadline to write



and illustrate a newspaper filled with headlines, articles and collaged pages that describe our community twenty years from now, with art and culture at the core of all initiatives....

The group of 50+ citizen journalists assembled in groups led by editors heading up editorial departments of Immigration and Human Rights, the Natural World and Environment, Technology, Social Systems, Health, Public Space, Faith, Spirituality and Community Celebrations, Education, and Anarchy.

Participants free-wrote their way through an ordinary day in 2034, then commenced to write, draw, and collage stories in their newspaper from the future. See their visions [here](#).

THE HARRISONBURG, VA, IMAGINING was one of the first of the 2015 season. Harrisonburg, a college town in the Shenandoah Valley, has a population under 50,000, nearly 85% white. About half the local populace comprises students on one of five college campuses. Cultural Agent Jon Henry sited the Imagining in a public park. In an [interview for the USDAC blog](#), he described moments that stood out:

A grad student, [Nate St. Amour](#), did plein air painting throughout the Imagining. ["plein air " means "open air" in French; plein air painting takes place outdoors, capturing the moment.] The plan was not to make it an actual plein air painting, painting only what you see. We said, "We want you to take suggestions from everyone at the event about what to paint in the landscape."

It was kind of a time-capsule throughout the day, because at the beginning it was kind of standard. But by the end, you can tell that people's imaginations had opened up because there were floating libraries and water slides in the town. And zeppelins....

I was really surprised that environmentalism was a guiding commonality throughout all the groups and

all the sessions. Everyone talked about the city being pedestrian-friendly. There were all these creative ideas around public transit from zeppelins to water slides to community bikes. A lot of non-university people talked about wanting access to the university: they imagined it being free and having more class offerings, continual learning. That was a really nice moment.

THE BALTIMORE IMAGINING was held on June 20, 2015. It was led by Cultural Agent Denise Johnson, based in West Baltimore (which two months earlier had been the site of an uprising triggered by the death in police custody of Freddie Gray). She organized the Imagining in collaboration with a group of partners: CultureWorks, Out4Justice, Theatre Action Group, the Parks and People Foundation, and Bon Secours Community Works.

In an [interview for the USDAC blog](#), Denise described a session that focused on iJustice, an exhibit by West Baltimore artist Ashley Milburn of "social justice art inspired by iPhone images that have turned into provocateurs for justice and image making:"

The exhibit consists of images of alleged police brutality. They're these really big, bold, bright-colored images of the young men that were killed: police standing over them, a woman embracing them, things like that. The facilitator, Ashley Milburn, started the conversation off with why it's called iJustice: the power that young people have bestowed upon themselves to take images of these things. If it wasn't for them and the cell phone, we would not have been able to capture things the way that we did. His end result for the conversation is to move people past anger and frustration, to get into a conversation about race, but then to try to visualize race and race relations. It's a session that allows people to enter and exit however they want to, whether it's with anger, frustration, sadness. But the end result is really to ask

“how can you think about race differently? How can we talk about race differently?”

#IMAGINING: CREATIVE STRATEGIES TO FIGHT GENTRIFICATION IN NEW YORK CITY drew 300 participants in New York City on June 6, 2015. Cultural Agent Betty Yu, who led the Imagining, described her intentions in an [interview with Next City](#):

Why has gentrification become such an important issue for you?

I grew up in Sunset Park’s Chinatown in Brooklyn and grew up going to Manhattan’s Chinatown. Within the 12-year reign of Mayor Bloomberg

and his over 120 rezoning plans, he effectively put in place a master plan to massively displace working class, immigrants and people of color from their own neighborhoods. These effects will be felt for generations to come. We must take it back now and fight back now.

I am seeing neighborhoods being uprooted of their culture, language, sense of history and people. I also believe we are at a crossroads in the organizing work where we have to come up with new creative ways of organizing. These real estate developers are accelerating gentrification and are trying to pit poor working-class residents against other residents who also need a place to live and have more flexible income to pay higher rents. But the real culprits are the real estate developers. We need to figure out how to shift the public debate and to push for just housing policies.

What idea made the most impact on you?

The event was presented in two major acts. The first act was a presentation of organizers, cultural workers, media makers and activists who talked about the creative ways they have tackled gentrification. Part two had participants break into groups by borough and do a visual imagining and mapping exercise. Participants used only symbols and pictures to express the current

conditions in their neighborhoods, what housing justice looks like in 20 years and the path it would take to get there.

More than 4,000 people in 23 cities have taken part in Imaginings:



- Baltimore, MD
- Boston, MA
- Brisbane, CA
- Carrboro, NC
- Chicago, IL
- Cleveland, OH
- Decatur, GA
- Fort Lauderdale, FL
- Germantown, PA
- Harrisonburg, VA
- Lawrence, KS
- Miami, FL
- New Orleans, LA

- New York City, NY
- Philadelphia, PA
- Phoenix, AZ
- San Antonio, TX
- San Francisco Bay Area, CA
- St. Croix River Valley, MN
- St. Louis, MO
- Stockton, CA
- Tucson, AZ
- Washington, DC

As local organizing catalyzed by an Imagining takes off, a Cultural Agent and groups of Citizen Artists may open a **Field Office**. For example, in Lawrence, Kansas, Cultural Agent Dave Loewenstein started with a June 2014 Imagining at Haskell Indian Nations University in which participants stepped through a time portal to convene in the future, then opened a Field Office whose members have been deeply engaged in questions of cultural development. In a [May 2015 interview for the USDAC blog](#), Dave described some of what the Field Office had been doing:

We collaborated with folks during the People’s Climate March and helped put on a sort of last-minute but wonderful event in a downtown park with folks from the Cowboy-Indian Alliance and Haskell Indian Nations University. We’ve had a presence at City Hall: we’re

showing up, we're speaking from the perspective of the Field Office. We've written a bunch of letters that we've put together as a group, commenting on issues that are happening. We worked on The People's State of the Union [a USDAC National Action], did a couple of those sessions that went really well. Most recently we've been meeting with the cultural planning team that's been here to do Lawrence's first-ever Cultural Plan. So there's a lot. I think our next thing coming up is we'll be on the annual Art Car parade, we're going to have our own Field Office entry."

NATIONAL ACTIONS

Where Imaginings and Field Offices are deeply embedded in and shaped by local conditions, National Actions offer a variety of ways to participate, both close-up and at a distance. Groups can sponsor in-person gatherings that generate contributions to the National Action, and individuals anywhere can post texts and images directly to each Action's web portal.

The [People's State of the Union](#) (PSOTU) is an annual civic ritual and participatory art project inaugurated in 2015 and shaped by this set of questions:

Once a year, the President delivers the State of the Union address, a speech meant to highlight important national issues from the past year and suggest priorities for the coming year. It's a broadcast from one to many. But what if, once a year, we could all speak and listen to each other? What if We the People reflected in our own communities on the condition of our culture and the state of our union locally, nationally, globally? What if we could supplement the President's stories with our own? The People's State of the Union is an invitation to do just that.

The chief mode of group participation was through story circles. More than 150 were hosted across the country, quite a few in the context of large-scale public events incorporating multiple circles.

A story circle is a small group of individuals sitting in a circle, sharing stories—usually from their own experience or imagination—focusing on a common theme. As each person in turn shares a story, a richer and more complex collective story emerges. By the end, people see both real differences and things their stories have in common. A story circle is a journey into its theme, with multiple dimensions, twists, and turns. Story circles are wonderful at creating instant democracy and equality, since everyone gets an equal turn, and all stories are welcome. This freedom sparks ideas, sharing, and the feeling that participants are all in it together.

Whether they emerged from story circles or from individuals posting directly to the People's State of the Union 2015 web portal, people shared hundreds of PSOTU stories online. Overall, this confirmed our hypothesis of keen



and widespread attention to the public interest in culture. Children and elders, Native Americans and newcomers, individuals in every region, line of work, and demographic category demonstrated their desire to share in assessing the state of our union and to deepen and strengthen the bonds that support our resilience and social imagination.

Why haven't all of them shown up before to weigh in on the great cultural questions of our day? We think the answer is simple: no one asked till now.

As a people-powered department, the USDAC has access to formidable creative tools to spread the messages

National Action participants want to send. For instance, at the conclusion of the PSOTU 2015 week of story circles, a remarkable group of poets led by Minister of Poetry and Language Protection Bob Holman of the USDAC National Cabinet created a collaborative [Poetic Address to the Nation](#). Sonnets by diverse and accomplished poets from across the nation—from Luis Rodriguez in Los Angeles to Joy Harjo in Albuquerque to E. Ethelbert Miller in Washington, DC—alternated with verses composed in New York by a group including Cyd Charisse Fulton, reg e gaines, Tahani Salah, and many others.

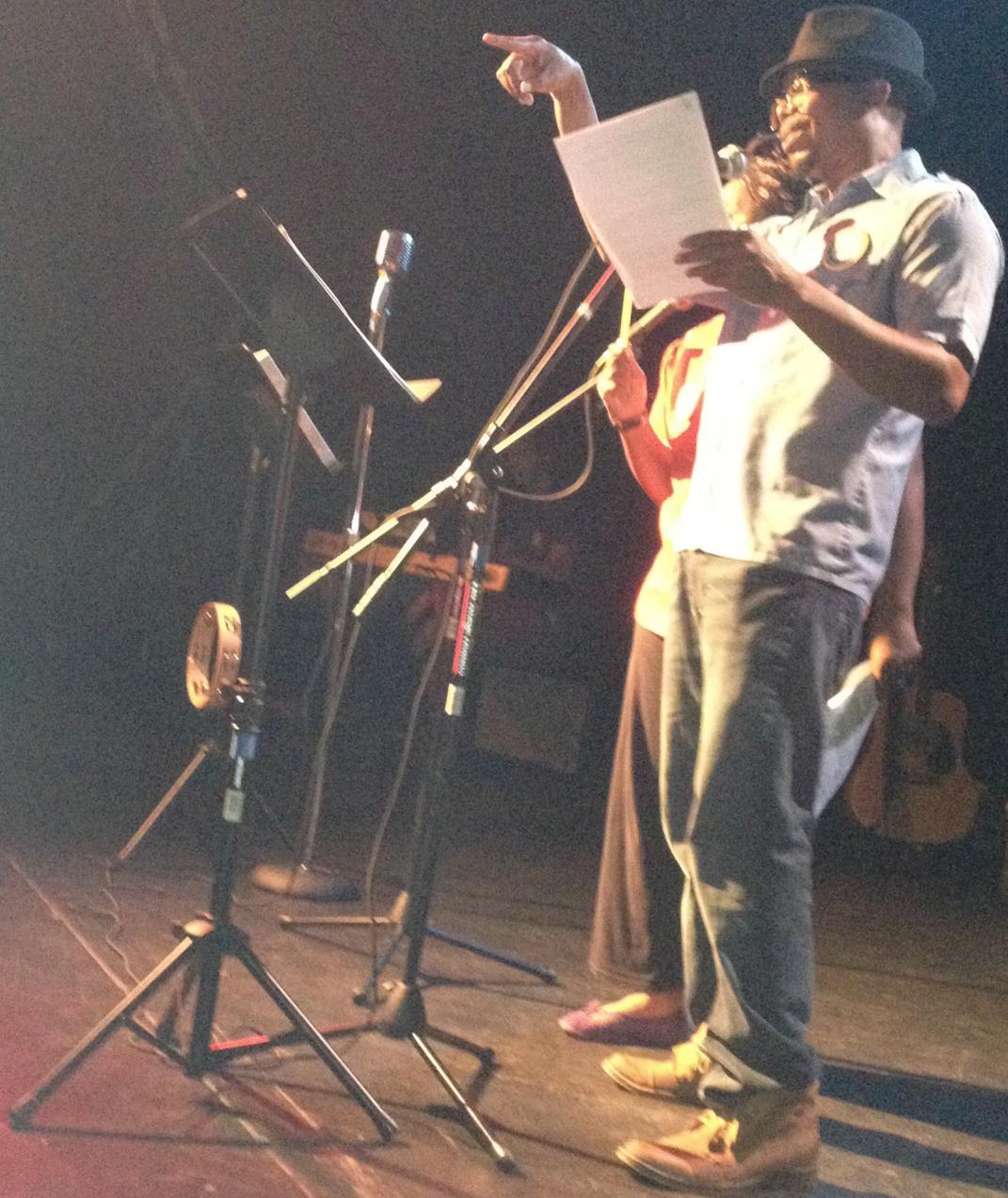
The entire text can be downloaded (and performed) anywhere, and a [short video](#) was made featuring footage

both from the story circles across the country and from the live-streamed Poetic Address at Bowery Poetry in New York on February 1.

Each of these elements and the public response it engendered has added to the composite picture we are building of the future people desire and the policies and initiatives that can help to shape it.

The next section, “Distilling Knowledge,” summarizes the views on key cultural issues of participants in Imaginings and National Actions to date. At this writing, USDAC activists are eager to discover what the October 2015 National Action, #DareToImagine, will reveal. Late this fall, we’ll also launch People’s State of the Union 2016.

3. DISTILLING KNOWLEDGE



Our era seems so addicted to compartmentalizing experience that we need new language to contain it. These days, we don't need mere drawers, files, or portfolios to separate categories of human experience, we need whole silos!

The USDAC's work is based on an integral view, one that reunites all our dimensions as individuals and communities, allowing congruent responses to social conditions. For example, in August 2014, the USDAC issued a call for "**Creativity for Equity and Justice**" following on the killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO. The statement, endorsed by key artists and activists, asserted the USDAC's understanding of the indivisibility of social issues. Here's an excerpt:

As artists and creative activists, we understand that even as our present crises arise from economic and political conditions, these crises are rooted in culture.

- Official violence is a cultural issue.
- The denial of human rights is a cultural issue.
- Racism is a cultural issue.

This is the lens that enables clarity in seeing community members' dreams, stories, and creations as fundamentally cultural, calling for cultural responses. Through local Imaginings and National Actions, people commented on countless aspects of current experience and future vision. The following sections summarize what we learned from participants' contributions, organized by the most popular topics. The first-person stories accompanying these summaries are all taken from participants' testimonies as part of the People's State of the Union 2015.

COMMUNITY AND BELONGING

When people uploaded their stories to the People's State of the Union 2015 website, they were encouraged to tag them by subject to help visitors cull from the great mass of stories, based on their own interests. "Community" and "Belonging" were by far the most frequently used tags, revealing a deep truth of U.S. society at a crossroads. On the one hand, Americans are incredibly mobile, with high rates of internal and transnational migration. Overall, **one in nine Americans** moves each year, including about a quarter of renters. On the other, the longing to belong—the desire for full cultural citizenship—is a powerful and pervasive human quality.

Some of the stories tagged with these terms illustrate a sense of alienation from the surrounding community; others

I moved to the Rockaways in 2012, just a couple of months before Hurricane Sandy. And before Sandy, I was kind of struggling with the concept of belonging, because I was a new resident and wasn't sure if people saw me as part of this wave of gentrification of people moving from Brooklyn to the Rockaways. And at the same time, I was also feeling an intense sense of belonging to the natural landscape, to the community of people who love the ocean. I was also just starting to understand the challenges of living out on that peninsula—the challenges that everyday folks face: transportation, lack of resources and services. But sharing the experience of Sandy together created an instant feeling of belonging, because we are all supporting our neighbors; people were taking showers in my house because my hot water heater

describe moments in which people felt distance drop away in the embrace of social connection. But all of them point to a deep truth: Everything we know about overcoming alienation engendered by rapid change, displacement, and the anonymity of a social order designed for profitable efficiency rather than conviviality points to culture as the way to knit social fabric and create feelings of belonging.

In so many places, different cultural groups are separated not so much by geography as by attitude. Anglos and Latinos may live a block or two apart and never enter each other's territory unless compelled by necessity. Such cultural distance feeds objectification: people become categories rather than individuals, leading to indifference or even hostility. How do we restore the clear sight that counts others' well-being as equal to our own? Vivid depictions of experience different from our own activates an empathy that can cross cultural barriers.

Less obvious barriers also exist within communities, generating easy dismissal of those who don't adhere to dominant norms: sexual orientation, religion, disability—the sense of belonging can be highly contingent for those whose difference subjects them to stereotyping, even ostracism. This social trauma, like individual emotional trauma, can be



healed when conditions support telling one's story in fullness and having it received with respect and compassion. Art enables true belonging and social healing, so long as those conditions are met.

was on the 2nd floor and theirs were flooded. People made food for each other. So belonging isn't the same as authenticity, or just how long you've lived somewhere, there's a lot of different ways of how belonging can be created.

There was a way in which that experience had two different effects. One the one hand, it scattered people, because people had to find housing wherever they could. But it also brought people together quickly. Most importantly, how people came back, the way and the pace at which they recovered, really highlighted the ways in which there were so many different experiences in the same place based on wealth and social capital. This new post-Sandy sense of belonging meant we were more united in fighting for more than just returning to the way things were, but rather to move towards greater resiliency and equity for all Rockaway residents.

Prerana Reddy, Rockaway Park, NY

Growing up as a young girl in this country, it is often hard to find your belonging. Especially, being a black young girl. I remember watching TV and wishing that one day I would be like the girls I saw, with their perfect straight hair, light skin, and glistening white teeth.

I've grown older and more educated now. However there are times when I wish I was still a young and naive girl, sitting at home, knowing that this country is beautiful with equal rights for every one because we are all human. But this previous year, 2014, has forced me to educate myself on every aspect of my life, even the most painful parts.

One moment I will never forget is the night that the Grand Jury decided not to indict Officer Darren Wilson. I felt my heart drop and crush to pieces as their decision was revealed. Fear overcame my body, as I heard my little brother walk behind me and my thoughts rushed to my older brother. Knowing that my funny, intelligent, loving siblings are just walking targets tore me to shreds. While watching the passion and rage of protesters be illustrated that night, I realized that a small fraction of me had hope that maybe for once, the American justice system

RACIAL AND CULTURAL EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND JUSTICE

After more than two years of planning, the USDAC's public launch took place in October 2013 at a conference of the campus-community cultural alliance Imagining America. Less than a year later, Ferguson, Missouri blasted into the headlines as a flashpoint for the sorrow and rage that had been building through years of official indifference—and hostility—to black lives. Racism—especially the publicly funded variety that has fueled police militarization and cut short so many lives—occupies a huge space in our thematic universe.

From many quarters have come proposals for concrete actions to address some of racism's overt symptoms. Examples include community oversight and monitoring of police, better training for law enforcement officials, and ending official incentives to militarize local police forces.

Other symptoms of racial and cultural bias are less specific and material, but just as likely to distort social relationships and create inequities. How are young people taught to regard racial and cultural differences? How do commercial media instill fear of difference? How does the depiction of women shape their real-life opportunities? Whether having to do with race, gender, orientation, or countless other differences, how does the privilege conferred as a birthright on some demographic categories exact a heavy price from others?

Almost without exception, participants in Imaginings and National Actions saw racial and cultural equity, inclusion, and justice as the bleeding edge of our collective cultural challenge. The observations and stories they posted were almost all deeply personal, self-revealing, and sobering to read.

DISPLACEMENT AND PLACEKEEPING

The term “gentrification” was coined by British sociologist Ruth Glass in 1964 in her book *London: aspects of change* to describe specific processes leading to notable shifts in community population and character in working-class neighborhoods:

One by one, many of the working class neighbourhoods of London have been invaded by the middle-classes—upper and lower. Shabby, modest mews and

wouldn't disappoint Black Americans, but yet again, it did. The case of Darren Wilson murdering Michael Brown in cold blood was no surprise to many black people. Police brutality has managed to be enforced upon us for as long as we can remember, however, when the media decided to take notice, African-Americans chose to take full advantage of the media attention, and expose the murders upon murders that have been conducted by police officers against non-threatening black people.

I'reyon Wright, Fort Worth, Texas

I think I am still trying to make peace with my belief that race does not have to be the dominant way I experience this country. In a country dominated by a white culture, with a few token exceptions, there are no English Americans or Scandinavian Americans; so does there have to be Asian Americans and African Americans? Aside from the fact that this completely ignores what history has to say about it (race has always been important), I sometimes wonder if my conviction is in natural opposition to race pride and diversity. I'm not advocating for homogeneity, but I wonder if I naturally incline towards dreaming an idealized world that may just never exist—because the reason why race pride needs to exist is because hate words and hate crimes and police brutality and institutionalized racism exist.

All these are just words, and I wonder if they really mean anything in the physical world, where things are constantly in motion. I love myself; I love being half Japanese and half Chinese. But as much as I love the food and the traditions and the values and the people and my own family, I don't know either language very well, and I don't know if I want to live in my parent's home countries; and though I don't consider myself stars-and-stripes patriotic, I do love living in America.

Maybe, at the base of it all I just wish I could choose what being Asian means to me, and how much I want it to affect my life, instead of having these decisions made for me. Maybe I want more room to love myself.

Colin Yap, San Francisco

cottages—two rooms up and two down—have been taken over, when their leases have expired, and have become elegant, expensive residences ... Once this process of ‘gentrification’ starts in a district it goes on rapidly, until all or most of the original working-class occupiers are displaced and the whole social character of the district is changed.

The problem isn’t so much increasing prosperity—if it benefited all, that would be an unalloyed boon—as the resulting dispossession. More recently, activists and commentators have been using the term “displacement” to



describe the impact of gentrification on a neighborhood’s former residents. Instead of the trendy concept of “placemaking,” they propose “placekeeping,” a commitment to ensure that cultural fabric is strengthened through the process of development, with longtime residents benefitting at least as much as newcomers from community development initiatives.

Displacement was an issue in many Imaginings across the U.S., and it was the focal point of the New York City Imagining in June 2015, which drew more than 300 participants.

Quite a few of the stories and observations that USDAC participants shared were relevant in a particular, pointed way because many of them came from artists with strong neighborhood ties. They had seen artists’ proclivity to bring attractive new gathering-places and enterprises to low-rent neighborhoods employed as a lever to open the floodgates of displacement. Often and unhappily, they saw themselves as lacking social power to change that.

I identify as a place-based artist, but for the last year or longer I don’t have a place, where I live, that is my home. So I’m wrestling with that. When I think about the state of the union, I have spent the last five years traveling around the country. There are images that come up for me. Being in Detroit with the stereotypical ruin-porn of burned out houses and desolate landscapes. But then there are also community gardens and artists who are in the trenches, rebuilding their communities in these innovative and exciting ways. Figuring out how we do this work when the system has failed us and we cannot rely on that any more. And it’s those experiences alongside going out on the river with Invincible, who’s a rapper, at sunset on a boat, or being in Southwest Detroit with people who are opening up their homes or seeing an alley full of murals. Or living with artists that are living way below the poverty line trying to raise children. But sacrificing everything they have to make their art in a city that they are from and love while waiting for Wednesdays for half-priced at the Laundromat.

Then into Appalachia, where there are artists who are living off the grid completely in some cases and really trying to figure out how community stories can revitalize a dwindling population. Hearing Robert say, “Well if you all want to gentrify us come on, we need somebody here.” That there is a need for people to come. And then in New Orleans where there is a sense of “Fuck the gentrification, get out we don’t want you here.” And living in New Orleans and watching my neighborhood become more and more white in a three-year time period and it’s happening so quickly. It’s fragments of the layers of our country right now, and the extremes in which people are trying to harness their creativity to make home and what that means to make home and to know your neighbor.

Ashley, Los Angeles, California

MIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

From the political right, the immigration story is fear-driven and belligerent. Just weeks before this report was published, headlines blared presidential candidate Donald Trump's commitment to deport millions of undocumented workers and end "birthright" citizenship as enshrined in the 14th amendment to the United States Constitution—along with accounts of attacks on Latinos whose perpetrators cited Trump's words as inspiration.

But the message that came through for communities that sponsored Imaginings and People's State of the Union story circles was very different: stories of struggle to sustain family, of disconnection from community, and of the yearning for full cultural citizenship.

Migration is a widespread fact of life in the U.S. Approximately 20 percent of international migrants come to the United States, accounting for around 13 percent of U.S. residents. (This is close to the proportion of immigrants in 1920, and a little less than in the 1870-1910 period.) Adding to that total the U.S.-born children of immigrants reveals that about one-quarter of the overall U.S. population is either first- or second-generation. According to USDAC participants, our collective challenge is to recognize and take advantage of this reality, seeing migration as an asset rather than a problem.

CultureStrike has been a leader in artists' response to anti-immigrant actions; the USDAC is honored that the group's executive director, Favianna Rodriguez, serves as Secretary of Cultural Equity on the National Cabinet.

CultureStrike's comprehensive approach illuminates the work needed to change the frame on an issue like immigration, where objectification, stereotyping, and fear-mongering distort the truth of a complex human situation, standing in the way of true democratic dialogue. Their three core activities interact and amplify each other, exemplifying effective work for culture shift: proactive, visionary strategy; investing in new narratives through a migrant lens; and sustaining artists who can be part of the larger movement.

Each of these is a critical element in reframing mainstream arguments. So many of our cultural debates are lopsided because the best-funded spokespersons and media set the terms, leaving everyone else in the weakened position of merely reacting. The necessary alternative is adopting an

A few years ago I was working for a non-profit. Even though I didn't have legal status, I worked with people from different races and faiths. It was difficult to be driving in my car with other leaders while the police were following us. What if I get deported? What will happen to my children?

I decided that I had to work very hard to fit in with this country. I built relationships with law enforcement officers and worked with them on community relations. I got to know Police Chiefs, Sheriffs, California Highway Patrol officers, and immigration (ICE) officers. This is how I created an experience of belonging.

One day I was stopped by an immigration officer at the airport. He asked me for my papers to prove I was a citizen. "Why are you asking me this?" I asked him. "I'm not leaving the country. Show me the written policy that says you can ask me for this. I have a constitutional right not to show you this." He said that he would "let me go this time." It showed me how important it is to know my rights, and I have organized many "Know Your Rights" events in the Latino community over the years.

Silvia Ramirez, Redwood City, California

I have a little girl three years old. The doctors detected diabetes; it has been difficult because she is at an age where she wants everything. I don't know if I am doing right with regard to what my daughter needs. Here we have the opportunity to get help, but in my country it would have been harder for her. We decided to come to the U.S. to look out for our children. We have an older daughter. I do have a lot of help from others in this country. In this case for my three-year-old daughter, she has been receiving help for medical—but in Mexico, she would not have received the help. She is currently receiving her treatment, but thanks to God I do not pay a dollar. Slowly we have continued our lives, but it is hard for me being the mother of a child so young with this sort of illness. In my country it is rare to hear of a child with diabetes. That's what I like about this country because here we receive a lot of help.

At our apartment, we got two months notice so I have to move out. It is not fair, because there are people who do not pay their rent and I pay mine. Right now there is no



affirmative, propositional stance, telling deep and nuanced stories of lived experience, and supporting artists in using their skills and talents to promote social imagination and social change.

EDUCATION AND YOUTH

Teachers and students—including some from primary schools—contributed a notable portion of People’s State of the Union stories. Parents also weighed in on the character of contemporary public education, sometimes comparing today’s teach-to-the-tests classrooms with their own experiences in a time when arts classes and electives were integral to curriculum. They shared the challenges many communities face: providing not only curriculum but safe space, nutrition, and social services for families stressed to the breaking-point by economic and social conditions.

Their visions spoke of wholeness and integration, their yearning for a future in which every child could be supported in developing to full capacity—body, emotions, intellect, and spirit. Their testimonies were particularly poignant in contrast to ubiquitous tales of school cuts, of a widening gulf between children of privilege and those who must make do with the offerings of the poorest public school districts.

From a policy standpoint, a thought-experiment devised by the philosopher John Rawls seems strongly relevant.

law that can help because I don’t have a contract. Rent has gone up and it is very stressful and a lot of people are still getting minimum wage. Sometimes we don’t agree with things that have happened. A lot of us who are in this country we might be able in Mexico to own our homes but not have enough money for school, for food and medical treatment. There is more opportunity here.

Maria Martinez, Redwood City, California

On a Friday afternoon before school began this year (I’m a teacher in a public school in North Philadelphia, about ten minutes from where I live in East Falls), every single teacher in the entire school and all the staff and the security staff as well walked throughout North Philadelphia as a group. And all of us wore our Edison shirts and walked the neighborhood that our kids walk to school. People came out to look, like who are these crazy people walking in green shirts throughout the neighborhood, and it’s a neighborhood I worked in as a teenager painting murals. And kids were coming out—they hadn’t started school yet, and they were yelling at us “Hey,” and I thought that maybe there’s this potential they would throw things at us because we’re teachers—we’re the bad guys in many cases—but the people in the community came up to us and said thanks. Thanked us for coming out and seeing them.

We pressed the flesh with all these people and stopped at one point to let other people catch up with us on Lehigh. I was shaking hands with a guy who turned out be the father of one my students. He had scar marks all over his arms from needles and drug use. I stood there with him, holding his hand for a long time. Feeling like this is what it’s all about. Like, I’m in this community. This is where I decided I wanted to be a teacher and have my own classroom. And here I am back years later as a paid teacher, shaking hands with this man whose daughter I taught the year before and who cried at my desk one afternoon because she had lost a friend of hers in a shooting. It was such a poignant moment for me to absorb and realize, we’re all people. We’re all in this community. We’re all participating in this experience of

Rawls asked if the best-off in any society would accept a proposed social or economic arrangement if they believed that at any moment they might find themselves in the position of the worst-off. He would have us choose rules for our societies not knowing what position we would be in when they were applied. Would we permit slavery knowing we might wake up as slaves? Would we permit the extreme polarization of wealth that is now characteristic of this society if we understood the likelihood of awakening among the homeless?

Would we support test-driven, factory-style education if our own children were required to make do with it? Certainly, the authors of these ideas and stories would not.

MACRO-ECONOMY AND CREATIVE ECONOMY

The great sociologist and activist C. Wright Mills wrote in his 1960 volume *The Sociological Imagination* about the American proclivity to treat public issues as private troubles. This is abundantly clear in the polarization of wealth that has created a chasm of social access and privilege. The decisions and circumstances that brought it about were decidedly public issues: for instance, taxation and regulatory policies favoring the consolidation of wealth. But they are often treated as private troubles, private shortcomings.



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Philadelphia, and this experience of growing up. He was about my age. We're living in the city, trying to do the best we can to get along with each other....

Syd, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Earlier this year, there were public hearings around mining in Northeastern Minnesota. The proposed mine is for rare metals—metals that would be used for devices like cell phones, but also to expand some green technologies like solar panels.

I grew up on part of the Iron Range. Every child that grows up in a rural community that has an extraction-based economy, has to decide whether to stay or to go. I decided to go as soon as I could, but I also harbored a lot of guilt about leaving. I started to get interested in this proposed mine. I listened to these hearings while rocking my baby to sleep on my cell phone—containing these same metals. In listening, I could tell before each person said more than a few words which side they were on based on their accents, and their tone. Many expressed deep sadness about needing jobs and needing to keep their kids and the next generation there. I could also hear in the voices of others what it might do to the environment.

I felt personally conflicted about how class exists spatially in rural and urban areas and divides. Supply chains of natural resources have geographic and spatial implications as well as economic and environmental impact.

Shanai Matteson, Minneapolis, Minnesota

I feel ashamed, embarrassed, and somewhat depressed to find myself sharing publicly what is going on in my life. I was one week away from starting a full-time job with the City of Houston when I was diagnosed with congestive heart failure in October 2008. Thanks to the Houston VA Hospital for saving my life. Since that month, I have been unemployed. While still in recovery and approaching 56 years old, I was unable to secure interviews for any employment. I am now 62 years old and am pretty much resigned to the fact that I will never

When someone loses a job or a home, the question is often posed this way: “What did I do wrong to deserve this?” Consequently, those who have fallen into the gulf between rich and poor risk drowning in shame leading to self-blame. Self-blame morphs into blaming others, who surely must have done something to warrant their troubles, and that morphs seamlessly into the scapegoating that marks our political discourse. What should be asked is this: “Who and what is responsible for the macroeconomic distortion that cost me my job?”

At Imaginings and in the People’s State of the Union, participants told their own stories of jobs and homes lost, or struggling to make ends meet, of coming face-to-face with unfairness writ large.

Among the USDAC’s strongest animating forces is the large number of artists who want to place their gifts at the service of democracy, renewal, and equity. One of the distressing subsets of testimony running through USDAC action research is how much our public economic issues have turned into private troubles for them, making their work economically untenable.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

Climate crisis is emerging into widespread awareness, galvanizing what some call a paradigm shift, in which the commonly accepted old story—of infinite resources exploitable without consequence—no longer describes our collective existence, and a new story emerges. Seen in this light, the present moment—a passageway between paradigms—offers us the opportunity to be part of a shift in human history, in which the things that have been shunted off to the margins—beauty, meaning, reflection, creativity, facing loss and finding resilience—will at last be given their true value. But how do we make the shift? To actualize it, necessity and creativity must collaborate.

Participants’ contributions to Imaginings and National Actions have illustrated the dynamic that encompasses so many in this society: on the one side, the despair (and therefore passivity) engendered by pervasive doomsday climate-change scenarios; on the other, the dawning understanding that changing our story really can change the world.

be employed again. My wife and I are doing everything we know how to do to create any income.

We have been renting this same house since 1999, and have probably paid more in rent than the house is worth. My 32 year-old son has refused to leave home in order that he may continue to support us through these tough times. That’s not fair to him. I have maintained and increased my computer skills; I am actively involved in social media. I am daily seeking real opportunities for income, but am convinced that self-employment is my only solution. I have recently been through eviction proceedings, and am gathering funds to prevent such action. I am also wondering how I am going to pay a \$330.00 electricity bill for one month. And forget about health care for my wonderful wife of 33 years. It is simply unaffordable. Recently, a trip to the grocery store had this old man in tears when looking at the meat prices. I never thought that I’d have to make such penny-pinching decisions. As a Vietnam-era veteran, I am increasingly disappointed with the direction the current administration has taken. Their unenthusiastic support of Veterans, Seniors, and Americans in general leaves much to be desired. I refuse to give up... We are tired, worn out, but not finished. Something good has got to happen soon.

Steve Martinez, Houston, Texas

My great-great grandfather is Pablo Silver, my great grandpa is Carl Delgado, my grandmother is Martha, my dad is Ed Meders, and that’s how I came here. My tribe is Mechoopda. We come from a small village in Northern California; we’re probably just over 700 people in our tribe, and our numbers have grown to that point—that number’s pretty good for us. So, I basically came from a people who came pretty close to being extinct, so my perspective, as an indigenous person, it’s always evolving, but mostly from an indigenous point of view with an idea that America for me, wasn’t founded on freedom, it was founded on resources. And that’s what we’re fighting over seas, what we’re fighting in our own country.

When it comes to the pipelines, or it comes to water rights, all these things are happening: we have water used for knocking coal and shooting it down, and carrying coal



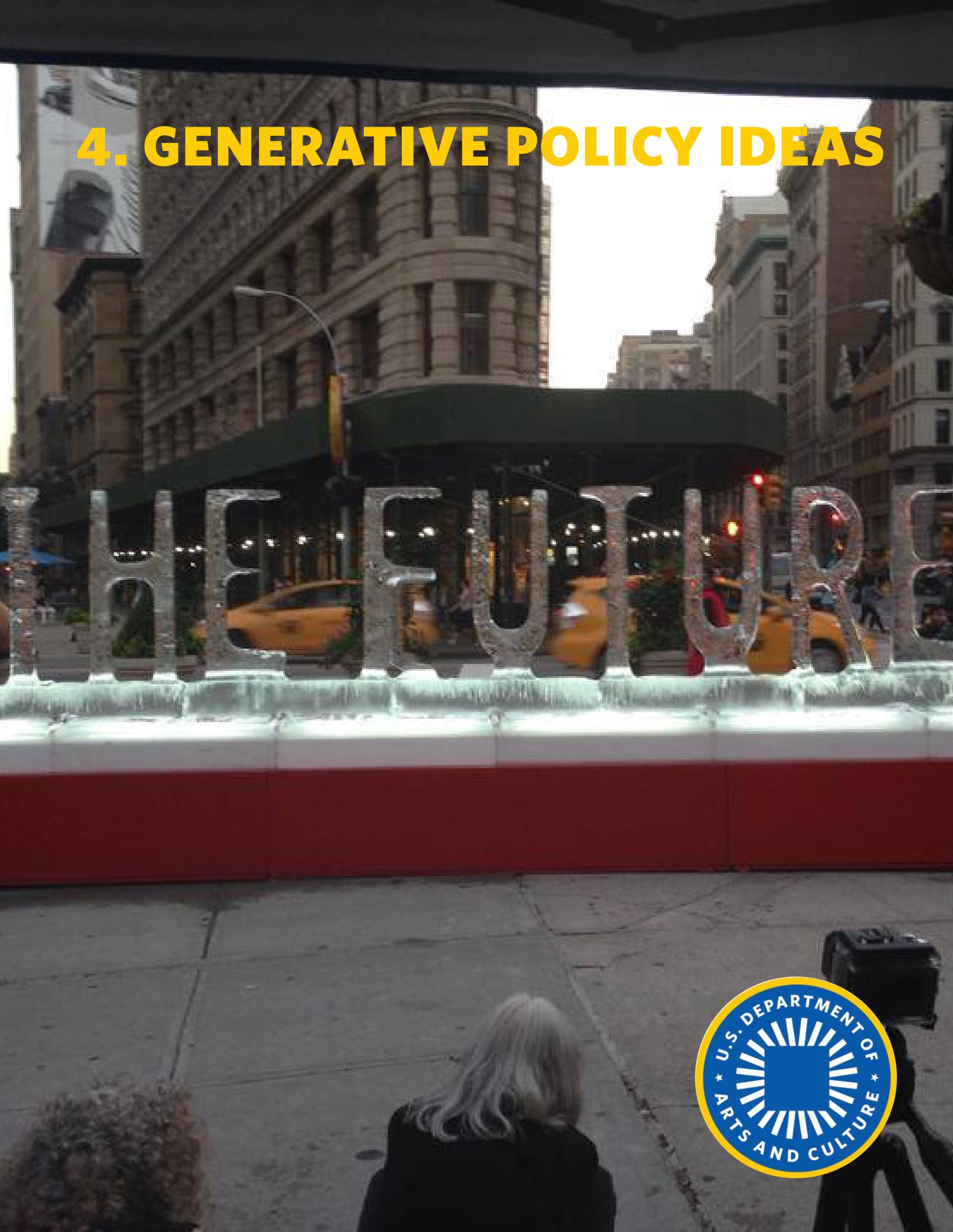
down pipes instead of actually giving water to families, so it's being wasted. We have water in California that's being manipulated by corporate industries, and we haven't had salmon run in some of these rivers for many, many generations now. It's not just here; we got places in South America where indigenous people are fighting for rainforest, and we're just destroying it.

We've got to think about what value and wealth really is. Whether we have some money in our pocket or what's on the stock for our tickets, that's not really wealth. Wealth is having clean air, clean water, good soil. What we're realizing now is that we're destroying all those things, all so a few people can have this illusion of wealth. If we think of what really, really matters for the quality of life: we need love, of course, we need clean air, clean water, and clean soil, and we do need to take care of each other, to take care of the earth....

The people before us sacrificed a lot to make sure we're sitting here right now, so we can have the liberty to have this discussion. It's just kind of a relay race that we're running in life. You can't look at the larger picture and say, like, "There's no way I'm gonna stop this in my lifetime." What you do is you make those baby steps. If you work your ass off in this lifetime, you're not gonna see what you accomplish. There's a saying, I think it's Walt Whitman, "You sit in the shade of trees that others have planted," right? So just keep moving in a positive way.

Jacob Meders, Phoenix, Arizona

4. GENERATIVE POLICY IDEAS



A year from now, following multiple rounds of Imaginings and National Actions, the USDAC will launch its first official policy platform, a compendium of proposals for policies and initiatives that can significantly advance cultural democracy: pluralism, equity, and collaborative creativity in support of social justice and social inclusion.

Here we provide six specific ideas to address the needs and aspirations summarized in the previous section:

Bureau of Cultural Citizenship

Rapid Artistic Response

Cultural Impact Study

Bureau of Teaching Artistry

Basic Income Grant

EcoArts Fund

In all cases, the USDAC is available to offer guidance and assistance to anyone wishing to devise policies and initiatives along the lines we have proposed.

BUREAU OF CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP

The main U.S. approach to cultural development (there are exceptions) can be compared to harvesting an orchard's finest fruits: competitions are staged and awards go to those who promise the most attractive end-products (e.g., works of performing or visual art). The alternative model is to feed and water the roots, ensuring that the means of art-making and artistic experience are widely and equally available. Strengthening cultural fabric and creating real cultural citizenship speak not only to the sense of belonging, but to all of the themes discussed in the previous section: racial and cultural equity, inclusion, and justice; displacement and placekeeping; migration and immigration, education and youth; macro-economy and creative economy—even environment and climate to the extent that people's connection to their own communities adds to their will to preserve them from environmental harm.

PROPOSED POLICY AND ACTION:

There are many ways to nurture the roots of culture. What if cities, states, or the nation created a Bureau of Cultural Citizenship charged with this responsibility and supported with both public and private funds? These three initiatives could comprise the principal activities:

- Long-term artist's residencies at the neighborhood level, where artists are supported to place their gifts at the service of community cultural development, designing

and executing projects that engage community members in expressing their own hopes and concerns through art-making, and offering works of art and experiences that bring people into positive contact through community celebrations, commemorations, and rites of passage.

- Support for community-based centers that engage people directly in art-making and art experiences, providing such social goods as public educational, performance, and exhibition spaces, providing skilled instruction, and serving as gathering-places across cultural barriers.
- Public and private programs that allow disused space such as vacant lots and empty storefronts to be repurposed as pop-up community cultural centers, engaging people in art-making and art experiences as they go about their day.

RAPID ARTISTIC RESPONSE

The USDAC is currently developing a Rapid Artistic Response Manual, offering guidance to artists and creative organizers who use their gifts to support communities facing natural disasters and/or stage creative interventions in communities where events (such as police killings of local residents in custody) are threatening to escalate beyond protest in a way that further imperils community members. Rapid artistic response should be a key element of response to both natural disasters (and the human-made factors that exacerbate them) and to cultural crises such as the April 2015 uprising in West Baltimore.



The creative community is perpetually ready to respond on all sides of such trigger points: to assist community members in powerful and beautiful modes of public expression; to provide comfort, connection, and consolation where it is needed; to help community members who wish to pre-empt even more damaging violence in the aftermath of a crisis.

For example, consider recent developments that have recognized the cultural dimension of racism as an important site for useful interventions. To focus on just one exemplary situation, Ferguson, MO: USDAC Cultural Agent Roseann Weiss of the St. Louis Regional Arts Commission made rapid micro-grants after Ferguson through their Community Social Impact Fund for drama classes, interactive public food events, civic matchmaking tools for artists and community groups, and more. The Action Support Committee organized by musician Taleb Kweli made small grants to a range of community programs in Ferguson, including arts initiatives. [Artists Against Police Violence](#) has compiled a large repository of images. [The Ferguson Moment](#) engaged theater artists in responding. Artist [Damon Davis](#) papered Ferguson with hands-up photographs. And a year later, as protests renewed, [many artists](#) found a way to honor Ferguson's cultural fabric.

Equally impressive lists of initiatives could be compiled for artists' response to Hurricane Sandy and Hurricane Katrina, the April 2015 Baltimore Uprising, national response to the killing of Eric Garner in July 2014, and too many more to list.

PROPOSED POLICY AND ACTION:

This innovation is multifaceted and collaborative: a shift in understanding that values artists' role in repairing social

fabric lacerated by crisis. In this arena, there are multiple policymakers whose values and viewpoints shape possibility:

- It's critical that funders, disaster relief agencies, law enforcement, and arts and cultural agencies and organizations give this work its full value, recognizing the key value of arts-based rapid response and providing the resources necessary to sustain it.
- Higher education programs and community education programs should support learning that equips artists to respond with creativity and sensitivity to situations that may leave others fearful, confused, or even paralyzed.

CULTURAL IMPACT STUDY

One of the key changes to be made in community development policy turns on the widespread public proclivity to see communities of color and low-income communities as disposable in the face of economic "progress." One repeated problem has been the destruction of longstanding neighborhoods—and along with buildings and public spaces, their cultural and social fabric—to make way for highly subsidized or otherwise profitable development projects such as new freeways or sports stadiums.

The disturbing fact is that culture has no legal standing, no grounds for protection. Contrast this with environmental protection. Since the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, federal projects require an environmental assessment, and if that shows possible negative environmental impact, an Environmental Impact Study to be prepared and considered before approval, modification, or rejection of the proposed project. This is one of the most powerful and influential tools of environmental policy, because it forces consideration of the impact of

actions on the environment before steps are taken that might do damage.

Right now, for example, if a local authority is asked to approve the destruction of homes, parks, and businesses in a long-lived neighborhood so that a sports stadium or freeway can be built there, NEPA mandates research into environmental harm such as possible destruction of endangered species habitat or potential pollution. If negative impact is found, the project can be disallowed or steps can be required to mitigate the impact before anything can be approved.

But what about the impact on cultural fabric? What about the sense of belonging, the sites of public memory, the gathering-places, the expressions and embodiments of heritage cultures that would also be destroyed? Every community should be authorized to assess, study, and act on these too. The purpose of a CIS is to help public officials make informed decisions that reflect a deep understanding of negative cultural consequences and the positive alternatives available.

PROPOSED POLICY AND ACTION:

This is a bounded and concrete problem that can be addressed by any local, regional, or national planning authority, as well as any organization or institution contemplating physical development that may impinge on community cultural life.

- All agencies and organizations with public planning responsibility should require a Cultural Impact Study (CIS) for every project with potential negative cultural impact, designating each project as approved, in need of mitigation to avoid cultural harm, or disapproved.

The complete text for a model resolution by a board of trustees or directors, a city council, county board of supervisors, state legislature or other authority adopting a CIS as official policy appears as an appendix to this report.

BUREAU OF TEACHING ARTISTRY

Many people are concerned about the prospects for full cultural citizenship—the rights and capacities that enable us to act on all of the issues explored in the “Distilling Knowledge” section—when students have been deprived of the opportunity to develop their own sensibilities and explore their own feelings and perceptions through artistic creation and interaction. Factory-style education relies

on rote information validated through standardized tests. But more and more, it is being recognized that emotional literacy and creative capacity must be nurtured if students are to be part of a resilient, compassionate future.

Happily, there is an abundance of teaching artists and arts educators who understand the centrality of art-making and art experience to a well-rounded education, one that adds to emotional as well as intellectual learning. Much of this work is being done under the banner of “arts integration,” infusing the entire curriculum with arts-based methods and techniques. The critical element is that students are engaged in work that braids pleasure and purpose, rather than having the art piece layered on like icing: coloring a diagram of an atom or a picture of the solar system isn’t going to do it. Eric Booth, who we are honored to have as Head Cheerleader for Teaching Artists on the USDAC National Cabinet, expressed it this way in his 2009 book *The Music Teaching Artist’s Bible*:

[T]he catalytic fuse that produces learning in both art and other subject matter is lit only when the students are caught up in the art part of the project. Up front. When students “make stuff they care about,” then that released energy springs into the connected curricular material, and only then do we tap the full potential of arts-integrated learning.

The problem is that this work is not supported. In a 2010 essay on teaching artists, Eric noted that “U.S. public school students average less than one third the number of in-school arts education hours than the average in other UNESCO countries.” Given the trend in school budgets and priorities, it’s very likely the figure has declined since then.

PROPOSED POLICY AND ACTION:

The key step is to put artists of skill, commitment, and passion into the classroom, rather than relying on classroom teachers with other strengths to deploy the “catalytic fuse” of arts-based learning. Teaching artists are more and more widely recognized as essential to a comprehensive education, with leading organizations such as [Big Thought](#) in Texas and [Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education](#) (to name just two among many) providing excellent training and support for in-school and community programs. As growing ranks of educators line up to question the mechanistic thinking behind approaches like “No Child Left Behind” and

“Race to The Top,” the nation needs to invest much more heavily in teaching artists’ work.

- It is critical that all public and private educational authorities recognize teaching artists as essential to education that equips students for full cultural citizenship, and support their work.
- Arts integration in curriculum should be designed and led by teaching artists in consultation with classroom teachers.
- Every school district should have a budget to support the work of teaching artists, allocated separately from funds supporting classroom art teachers.
- Every higher education program preparing artists for livelihood post-graduation should include curriculum devised by and for teaching artists, based on recognition of the distinct skillset effective teaching artistry requires.
- Every school should have at least one part-time staff position for a teaching artist to serve as a creativity and engagement coach, working with all faculty and staff members to activate learning and develop creative engagement in every part of the school day.



BASIC INCOME GRANT

When it comes to the economy, challenges for artists and cultural organizers are completely congruent with challenges for other workers. In arts realms as in others, the current system mandates overproduction. For example, the current system of grants for artists operates almost exclusively on a project basis, forcing artists who apply for support to constantly seek novelty and conform to arbitrary deadlines rather than allowing work to evolve and emerge according to a more organic timetable. As Adrienne Goehler (author of *Conceptual Thoughts on Establishing a Fund for Aesthetics and Sustainability*) has said, sustainability needs

deceleration. Regardless of our work, we all need to be able to rest and ruminate.

Part of the social imagination the USDAC cultivates is to foresee a time in which overproduction and overconsumption will no longer distort our society, thus discovering a way to live in balance with each other and the life of this planet.

PROPOSED POLICY AND ACTION:

A universal basic income grant (BIG)—the policy initiative we propose here—can benefit all equally, regardless of the fields in which they work. But it is especially promising for artists committed to community cultural development and cultural democracy, because so many of them struggle to cover living costs in a society—and philanthropic culture—that devalues their work. There is a standing joke that unemployment insurance is the largest source of subsidy to

performing artists, for instance, because dance and theater companies routinely employ artists during the performance season and lay them off afterwards so they may collect benefits. BIG delivers the same help, but obviates the need for an army of bureaucratic enforcers to vet, police, and deny benefits to those deemed unworthy. That saves a huge amount of public resource that can be channeled into basic income.

- The federal government and those of the separate states should introduce a basic income grant available to every individual regardless of income from other sources.
- This stipend should be set at a rate sufficient to cover basic needs (e.g., food, shelter, medical care) and made available without a means test or any other conditions.

There is an impressive body of rigorous research and compelling argument for the social and economic benefits

of a basic income grant system available through the Basic Income Earth Network, which has been gathering support for this concept.

ECOARTS FUND

More and more, we know the concrete measures that must be taken to protect Planet Earth from the consequences of climate change. What to do isn't the problem so much as how to obtain not just consent but vigorous commitment to actually do it. In cultural terms, the big challenge is in effect a paradigm shift, transforming our understanding of the planet from a repository or resources for short-term profit to a vast interdependent ecology in which our interventions should be carefully chosen for long-term survival and resilience.

It is our collective task to generate a reality-based hope to supplant the pervasive despair (and therefore passivity) engendered by a system that still treats global climate crisis like a matter of opinion instead of fact.

PROPOSED POLICY AND ACTION:

We can't change the story people hold in their hearts and minds by disseminating better data. As cognitive scientists

have proven, it is necessary to provide new and more powerful narratives that engage people's emotions and spirits along with their intellects, supplanting an old story that no longer fits the truth.

- The time is now for public and private funders of both environmental and arts work to create an EcoArts Fund, a new public-private fund to support arts-based projects created to align social attitudes with awareness of climate crisis and positive actions to ameliorate and respond to it.
- Projects and artists supported by the EcoArts Fund should reflect the full diversity of U.S. population, directing resources equitably to projects serving disenfranchised communities, migrant communities, women and others who have been pushed to the margins by mainstream funding systems.
- The EcoArts Fund should be treated as a type of venture-capital investment in arts-based social entrepreneurship, providing realistic yet modest start-up funding with quick turnaround, investing in multiple projects as a form of action-research, and channeling sustaining funding to those with greatest promise.

5. PAYING FOR CHANGE



The usual objection to proposals for innovative cultural interventions and new arts initiatives is funding. It's all well and good if communities across the nation want more investment in cultural development, but how do we pay for it?

We can't accept the premise for this question, because it takes as immutable a statement of national priorities that definitely doesn't pass the test of community support. If we were to take a poll that asked Americans if it reflected their own priorities for our commonwealth to spend nearly three National Endowment for the Arts' annual budgets on war every day, seven days a week, the overwhelming response would be no. When we tell people that the current NEA budget would have to be more than \$400 million (instead of the current \$146 million, or less than 50 cents per person) just to equal the spending power of the agency's FY1980 allocation, they are shocked.

Public arts expenditure, which has been characterized—accurately—as equivalent to a rounding error in the budgets of larger federal departments, features prominently in budget-cutting debates for entirely symbolic reasons. Politicians can gain reputations for fiscal responsibility by declaring their commitment to cut frills such as cultural agencies—even as they allocate vast sums to corporate subsidy, Big Carbon fuel companies, prison construction and privatization, and hyper-inflated defense contracts—just as magicians can misdirect spectators' attention from sleight-of-hand by directing it to insignificant but compelling details.

Rejecting the specious argument that the United States can't afford investment in cultural development, then, we offer for consideration a range of alternative modes of investment:

- **ADVERTISING TAX.** Authoritative estimates put advertising expenditure in United States in 2015 at about \$189 billion. Advertising is a public revenue source that is almost entirely untapped in the United States. When businesses buy ad space in publications, on broadcast media, on the internet, and on billboards, they pay no taxes. While advertising has always been part of the cost of doing business in modern times, prior to the digital age, the general division of expenditure was estimated at 80% for production and distribution, 20% for advertising. In many industries, advertising expenditures now beggar production costs. Typical estimates reverse the historic proportions, with 20% of costs going to production and 80% to advertising and promotion. A tax of only 1%

would generate \$1.89 billion (13 times the current annual NEA budget).

- **ROBIN HOOD TAX.** This is the popular name for a tax of less than half of one percent on financial transactions such as trades in derivatives, stocks and bonds, and foreign currency exchanges. A Robin Hood tax would require banks and investment firms to pay less than 50 cents for every \$100 they spend. It is estimated that it would generate \$350 billion per year (nearly 2400 times the current annual NEA budget). On average, U.S. taxpayers currently pay \$9.64 for every \$100 spent, but financial transactions generate no revenue comparable to sales taxes.
- **REDEPLOYING EXISTING ALLOCATIONS.** As the USDAC's Statement of Values says, "The work of artists is a powerful resource for community development, education, healthcare, protection of our commonwealth, and other democratic public purposes." We see a day in which a public service employment program comparable to the Works Progress Administration of the 1930s or the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of the 1970s puts artists to work for the public good, simultaneously addressing unemployment and stimulating both economic and cultural development through creative community-building initiatives.

But until the political will is present to support such a program, there is significant progress to be made by redeploying existing allocations. An obvious example is taking funds allocated to public information in agencies in which that activity is typically ineffective in generating real engagement. How many agencies hold pro-forma public hearings where officials go through their correspondence while one- or two-minute presentations by concerned citizens occupy frustrating hours? How many agencies produce boring or impenetrable information leaflets that are discarded by the thousands? Across the country, artists have proven themselves highly adept at enlivening information in the public interest and creating meaningful engagement and exchange with other community members. Spending these funds on their work would advance public policy goals for everyone.



IN CONCLUSION

This report was created to offer an inspiring glimpse of possibility: community-envisioned cultural policy that embodies the public interest in culture can take the place of special-interest cultural policy designed by and for the most powerful direct beneficiaries.

What if that glimpse turned into a steady gaze? We foresee a time in which cultural policymakers understand their task as listening deeply to the aspirations and concerns of the populace and responding with creativity to ensure full cultural citizenship for everyone in every community. As a people-powered department, we've taken matters into our own hands, demonstrating how it might be done. The required culture shift may start small, with specific communities and organizations adopting the generative policy ideas offered here. But with your help, it will spread and come to fruition.

To everyone inspired to follow the USDAC's lead, we reiterate our desire to collaborate in bringing about a national chain-reaction. Let's work together.

We invite you to begin by getting involved in the USDAC. A new cohort of Cultural Agents will join near the end of 2015, to host Imaginings in the spring of 2016. Early in 2016, the USDAC's next National Action will launch: The People's State of the Union 2016 will again offer story circles in scores of communities across the U.S., inviting We the People to reflect in our own communities on the condition of our culture and the state of our union locally, nationally, globally. Next year will also see the launch of a more complete set of policy proposals along with tools local organizers can use to bring them to life. Please [enlist in the USDAC](#) to stay informed and involved.





GLOSSARY

ACTION RESEARCH describes an approach of learning by doing. In action research, studying conditions leads to collaborating with others to change them. Based on the results of action research, the USDAC's focus and approach are refined.

CITIZEN ARTIST describes anyone who enlists in the USDAC, endorsing the Statement of Values. Citizen Artists work in many arenas, media, and locations. It isn't necessary to be a professional artist nor to be a U.S. citizen to be a Citizen Artist.

COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT describes a range of initiatives undertaken by artist-organizers in collaboration with other community members to express identity, concerns and aspirations through the arts and communications media, building cultural capacity and contributing to social change. Sometimes abbreviated CCD.

CULTURAL AGENT describes a volunteer creative organizer selected from a nationwide open call to enact the USDAC at a local level by hosting Imaginings. Each cohort of Cultural Agents works together to help spark a larger national conversation and movement cultivating the empathy and imagination we need to create a future we wish to inhabit.

CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP describes a condition in which every person feels at home in his or her own community, in which all contributions to history and culture are acknowledged and reflected in the cultural landscape, in which full inclusion is a lived reality granted to all regardless of identity, legal status, or other characteristics.

CULTURAL DEMOCRACY describes a philosophy or policy emphasizing pluralism, participation, and equity within and between cultures. Although it has roots in anti-Ku Klux Klan writings of the 1920s, it did not come into common usage until introduced as a policy rubric in Europe in the 1960s.

CULTURAL EQUITY describes the goal of a movement originated by artists and organizers from communities of color and their allies, dedicated to ensuring a fair share of resources for institutions focusing on non-European

cultures. The goal of cultural equity organizing is to redress and correct historic imbalances in favor of European-derived culture.

CULTURAL POLICY describes the aggregate of values and principles guiding any social entity in cultural affairs. Cultural policies are most often made by governments, from school boards to legislatures, but also by many other institutions in the private sector, from corporations to community organizations. Policies provide guideposts for those making decisions and taking actions that affect cultural life.

CULTURE in its broadest, anthropological sense includes all that is fabricated, endowed, designed, articulated, conceived or directed by human beings, as opposed to what is given in nature. Culture includes both material elements (buildings, artifacts, etc.) and immaterial ones (ideology, value systems, languages).

DEVELOPMENT (with its many subsets such as "economic development," "community development" and "cultural development") describes a process of analyzing the resources and needs of a particular community or social sector, then planning and implementing a program of interlocking initiatives to rectify deficiencies and build on strengths. The community cultural development field stresses participatory, self-directed development strategies, where members of a community define their own aims and determine their own paths to reach them, rather than imposed development, which tends to view communities as problems to be solved by bringing circumstances in line with predetermined norms.

FIELD OFFICES are local nodes of the USDAC, established by Cultural Agents and their teammates for continued organizing after Imaginings. Field Offices coordinate and multiply the impact of our collective efforts by promoting, disseminating, and enacting USDAC values in a way that is locally rooted and relevant.

IMAGININGS are vibrant, arts-infused gatherings which bring together a diverse cross-section of neighbors to 1)

envision their towns and cities in 20 years, when the full transformative power of art and culture has been integrated into the fabric of society; and 2) to identify ways to get there, harnessing latent artistic talent and local cultural resources.

SOCIAL FABRIC (also cultural fabric) describes the aggregate of embedded history, customs, modes of gathering and communication, relationships, and institutions that sustain and enliven community life.

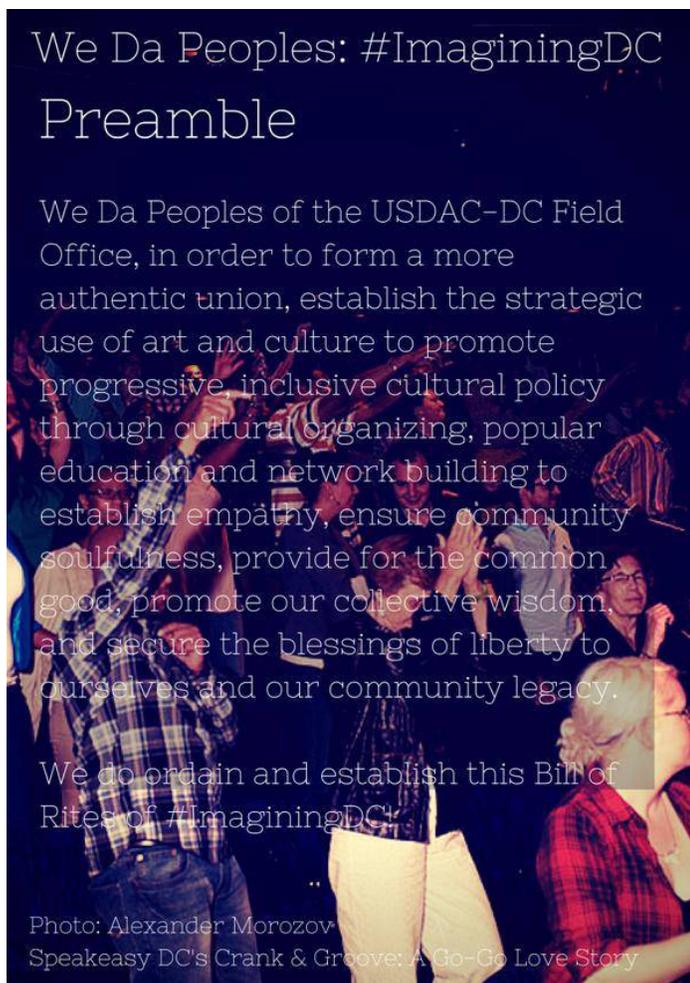
SOCIAL IMAGINATION describes the capacity to envisage alternatives to existing social arrangements, institutions, and policies. Social imagination asserts each person's right to a voice in society, helping to shape the future.

SOCIAL JUSTICE describes a condition in which equity, inclusion, fairness, and integrity shape social reality. When social justice prevails, entrenched privilege is replaced by

full, participatory democracy, and full human rights are guaranteed to all.

STORY CIRCLE describes a small group of individuals sitting in a circle, sharing stories—usually from their own experience or imagination—focusing on a common theme. As each person in turn shares a story, a richer and more complex story emerges. By the end, people see both real differences and things their stories have in common. A story circle is a journey into its theme, with multiple dimensions, twists, and turns.

Story circles are often understood as deriving from indigenous traditions. There are many variations. Theater makers such as Roadside Theater and John O'Neal have been central in developing the practice for use in creating original performance and community telling and listening projects.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The USDAC gratefully acknowledges the invaluable contributions of Cultural Agents, National Cabinet members, Citizen Artists, the Office of Instigation, and the Action Squad in giving so abundantly of time, energy, commitment, and creativity to this people-powered department. This report is dedicated to you!

The USDAC is grateful to The Ford Foundation and Roberta Uno for commissioning this report.

The USDAC is grateful to the many photographers across the nation who uploaded their images of Imaginings and other USDAC actions, and whose photos appear throughout this report.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE

USDAC.US@GMAIL.COM | USDAC.US

APPENDIX: CULTURAL IMPACT

USDAC Bulletin:

Why your community should require a Cultural Impact Study as a precondition for approval of projects that affect community cultural life, and how to do it.

How would your community be different if new construction and development projects had to pass a Cultural Impact Study (CIS)—analogous to an Environmental Impact Study—before approval?

Since the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, federal projects require an environmental assessment, and if that shows possible negative environmental impact, an Environmental Impact Study to be prepared and considered before approval, modification, or rejection of the proposed project. This is one of the most powerful and influential tools of environmental policy, because it forces us to consider the impact of our actions on the environment before we take steps that might do damage.

Right now, for example, if a local authority is asked to approve the destruction of homes, parks, and businesses in a long-lived neighborhood so that a sports stadium or freeway can be built there, NEPA mandates research into environmental harm such as possible destruction of endangered species habitat or potential pollution. If negative impact is found, the project can be disallowed or steps can be required to mitigate the impact before anything can be approved.

But what about the impact on cultural fabric? What about the sense of belonging, the sites of public memory, the gathering-places, the expressions and embodiments of heritage cultures that would also be destroyed? Every community should be authorized to assess, study, and act on these too. The purpose of a CIS is to help public officials make informed decisions that reflect a deep understanding of negative cultural consequences and the positive alternatives available.

The movement to institute a Cultural Impact Study isn't beginning with federal legislation: there just isn't the demand or representation right now to make that possible. Instead, forward-thinking communities across the United States can act to adopt their own requirements.

Below is model text for a resolution by a board of trustees or directors, a city council, county board of supervisors, state legislature or other authority adopting a CIS as official policy.

TOGETHER, WE CREATE.



USDAC Model Resolution Adopting a Cultural Impact Study

Whereas our cultural landscape is a rich and varied tapestry of heritage and new creation; and

Whereas the right to culture—to honor those who came before, express ourselves and take part in community life—is a core human right; and

Whereas we cherish equal opportunity to contribute to and benefit from cultural life for all community members, whether our families are indigenous to this land, have lived here for many decades or just arrived, whether we live in cities or the countryside, and regardless of color, creed, orientation or physical ability; and

Whereas equity, fairness and inclusion are the hallmarks of our support, protection and promotion of culture; and

Whereas we recognize that every community's cultural fabric is made of shared places, customs, values and creative acts and strengthening that fabric makes it more likely that children will stay in school, businesses will thrive, neighbors will celebrate and learn from each other; and

Whereas, when we forget to value cultural fabric in these ways, communities pay a price in loss of culture and conviviality;

Therefore be it resolved that (the City of, County of, etc., or organization name) _____ hereby adopts a policy requiring a Cultural Impact Study (CIS) for every project with potential negative cultural impact, including each of the sections and procedures described below.

Section 1. "Negative cultural impact" describes those actions that damage or destroy sites of public memory such as elements of buildings, streets, natural lands, and parks that commemorate events of significance to local communities, that disrupt long-lived patterns of association and communication such as open markets, plazas, and other gathering-places of significance to local communities, that damage or destroy embodiments of cultural heritage such as murals, concert venues, or festival sites, that disrupt existing community members' practice of their beliefs, that destroy or damage aesthetic assets of the existing community, or that displace populations that have contributed to the community's cultural richness and development, making it difficult or impossible for existing local residents to pursue longstanding and valued patterns of cultural preservation and participation.

Section 2. "Cultural Impact Study" describes an authoritative report on the potential negative cultural impacts of a proposed action involving the removal, construction, rezoning, or other significant alteration of buildings, streets, roadways, public parks, natural lands, and/or other gathering-places or thoroughfares.

Section 3. A Cultural Impact Study shall be required for any proposed action that (the City of, County of, etc., or organization name) _____ finds may entail negative cultural impact, mandating further investigation.

Section 3a. Any costs associated with preparing and submitting a Cultural Impact Study will be borne by the originator (or authorized representative) of the proposed action.

Section 4. In requiring a Cultural Impact Study, (the City of, County of, etc., or organization name) will set a deadline at least sixty (60) days in advance for submission of the CIS, will provide the originator (or authorized representative) of the proposed action with notice of

that deadline and the required contents of the CIS, and will post public notice of these actions to invite public comment on the day and time set forth for consideration of the CIS. If sixty days is deemed insufficient in any case, a later deadline may be set, providing it is no more than 180 days.

Section 5. Each Cultural Impact Study shall include the sections enumerated below.

Section 5a. An Introduction including a statement of the purpose and need of the proposed action.

Section 5b. A description of the affected cultural environment, including demographic information; a cultural history of the affected community(ies) noting past and present contributions to cultural fabric; and a list of the natural land(s) and water(s), building(s), park(s), monument(s), thoroughfare(s) and other features of the affected cultural environment. This section may cite Census data, ethnographic interviews and oral histories, ethnographic, historical, anthropological, sociological, and other culturally related documentary research, primary source materials such as vital statistics records, family histories and genealogies, community studies, maps and photographs, and other archival documents, including correspondence, newspaper or almanac articles, and visitor journals, as well as video and audio recordings and any other material relevant to a comprehensive description.

Section 5c. A range of alternatives to the proposed action in order of likely negative cultural impact.

Section 5d. An analysis of the negative cultural impacts of the proposed action and each of the possible alternatives, including but not limited to the elements enumerated in Section 1 above.

Section 5e. A cost analysis for each alternative, including costs to mitigate expected impacts, used to determine if the proposed action is an allowable use of (the City of, County of, etc. or organization) _____resources.

Section 6. (the City of, County of, etc. or organization) _____will review each Cultural Impact Study in a timely fashion, rendering a response no later than sixty (60) days following the conclusion of public comment on the day set forth for consideration of the CIS. If sixty days is deemed insufficient with respect to a particular CIS, a later deadline may be set, providing it is no more than 180 days. Each response will either: reject the proposed action for negative cultural impact; recommend one or more of the alternatives set out in the CIS, indicating approval if the recommended alternative is substituted for the original proposed action; describe mitigating action necessary for resubmission of the proposed action for approval; or approve the action as proposed.

Passed and adopted by (the City of, County of, etc., or organization name) _____
at a duly noticed and adjourned meeting held on (day, month, year) _____at
(location) _____.

(Authorizing signature/name/date)

Attest: (City clerk or equivalent authorizing signature/name/date)