Dear Potential partner -

This spring as the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, the Vermont Folklife Center launched our *Listening in Place* project as a way to engage with personal stories to strengthen relationships and create a record of what Vermonters are experiencing throughout this extraordinary time.

Now that the longevity of the pandemic is known and a global movement for equity and racial justice takes hold, we feel it’s even more important to continue this work of making time to connect and listen to one another, however difficult it may be.

Thanks to generous support from the Vermont Community Foundation and individual donors we have partnered with a variety of non-profit organizations around the state to bring aspects of *Listening in Place* to their communities and constituents. Would you/your organization like to join the project and explore the experiences of those closest to you during this time? Here are some examples of what we’ve been up to:

- With *Project Independence* in Middlebury we are recording weekly Zoom interviews with community members as part of the online offerings created by this adult day-care center.
- With *Big Heavy World* in Burlington we are facilitating several Virtual Story Circles for musicians connected through this community radio station to share and hear from others about how they’ve adapted to social distancing and what it means to be an artist during this historic time.
- *UVM Students in an Activist Journalism* class were given an assignment to call and record an interview with someone as a way to hear different perspectives on this global crisis.

With permission from participants, recordings made through *Listening in Place* are added to the VFC Archive to become an enduring record of this time (although archiving the recordings is not required). VFC staff assist in developing questions and outreach ideas as well as tech support to make these community based documentary projects happen. Each collaboration looks slightly different as we strive to work together to create something that will be meaningful to the people and organizations involved.

If you are interested in exploring a *Listening in Place* partnership with VFC, and have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to be in touch with me. I look forward to connecting.

Best,
Mary Wesley
*Listening in Place Project Coordinator*