

Facilitation Plan

The Economy and Democracy: The American Dream?

I. CONTEXT SETTING: Introducing the Discussion (2-3 mins.)

This conversation is intended to explore the relationship between the economy and the health of our democracy. In this discussion, let's dive deeper and explore the assumptions we have, and the stories we tell, about the economy in its relationship to our democracy. We'll explore what we mean by "the American Dream," and question whether it's more of an economic or a democratic dream—and whether it is still alive for most Americans.

II. DISCUSSION AGREEMENTS:

It helps to have some group agreements about how we'll engage in this conversation. Our suggestions are:

- **Be generous:** Helping each other to explore and remaining open to the truth others express
- **Be bold:** Opening ourselves up to new and different perspectives
- **Be connected:** We're here to make connections with each other rather than to win an argument

III. ROUND ONE: ROUND ROBIN Introductions and Personal Connections to the Topic (5-10 mins.)

Take a minute or so to introduce yourself and share what you think of when you think of the phrase, "the American Dream." What do you picture and what does it mean to you?

IV. ROUND TWO: OPEN DISCUSSION **Expanding our Sense of the Topic (40-60 mins.)**

Let's continue to explore "the American Dream."

What might be different components or aspects of the American Dream?

- What could or should be in the basket of goods (or capacities) that would show that the American Dream has been realized?
- What challenges do we see for the American Dream?
- Whose dream is it? Is it still alive — and for whom?
- How does the American Dream relate to democracy? What assumptions do we have about the relationship between the American Dream and democracy — and how do these assumptions hold up?
- What stories do we tell about the economy and its relationship to our democracy — and are these stories working for us? What are different stories we could tell about the economy and our democracy?

V. ROUND THREE: **Looking Ahead and Wrapping Up (10 mins.)**

- What are some initial ideas for a new vision for the American Dream, or new versions of that dream, that might address some of the challenges or concerns we've discussed today?
- As we wrap up, what are some of the key insights or questions that you will take away from this conversation?