

Facilitation Plan

The Economy and Democracy: Reimagining the American Dream

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

This conversation is part of an exploration of the relationship between the economy and the health of our democracy. You might think of this conversation as reimagining what new versions of “the American Dream” could look like – “dreams” that might connect economic and democratic aspirations. A big question we want to explore today is: What would it look like if our economic system was boosting, rather than weakening or stressing, the health of our democracy? What would it look like to have an economic system in the service of a healthy democracy rather than the other way around?

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 something that you think is working to make our economic system more supportive of the health of our democracy (rather than stressing or undermining it). What’s something that is working to democratize our economy or to boost the democratic part of the American Dream?

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

Let's engage in an imaginative exercise. Picture a world where the economic system is boosting the health of our democracy, rather than creating stress on it. You can think of this as reimagining the American Dream as first and foremost as democratic dream. You might think of democratic ideas of freedom, equality, dignity, and justice — and think about what economic policies would look like to support these ideals for all.

- How might our newly imagined economic system better support our democratic values rather than the other way round? What would this world look like? What would our country look like?
- What else could we do to create an economy that supports our democratic ideals and makes for a healthier democracy?

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

- Where do you see some bright spots in the present that we could amplify to move toward the different visions of the American Dream that we discussed today?
- What steps do you imagine we could take to move toward an economic system that is more supportive of a healthy democracy?
- As we wrap up, what are some of the key insights or questions that you will take away from this conversation?