PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PROJECT
Our Mission

This is a tough time be working on budgets and democracy. Governments are considering massive cuts for programs that are critical for communities. People are tired of politics as usual, tired of their voices not being heard. We have a big problem: Our democracy is not working.

At PBP, we have a big solution: Share real power over real money. We the people can do more than elect our leaders - we should also have the power to directly decide what government does. Thousands of people across North America are already turning this vision into reality, taking budgets into their own hands and building civic power with participatory budgeting.

PB gives communities new opportunities to learn together, work together, and grow together. It lifts up the voices of young people, women, people of color, low-income residents, and others who are often not prioritized by government. When we give people control over their public money we learn what they need, and we invest in our democracy.

PBP is the first and only nonprofit dedicated to growing PB across North America. Since I founded the organization in 2009, we have supported 174 PB processes in dozens of cities, empowering 300,000 people to decide how to spend $240 million.

This past year was busy, as we worked to build a responsive, equitable, and people-powered democracy:

We expanded PB across North America. We supported PB processes in 24 cities, and launched the first PB processes for a school district (in Phoenix, AZ) and for federal funds (Community Development Block Grants in Oakland, CA).

We built new tools for democracy. The quality of PB processes is just as important as quantity. We developed a library of tools and resources to make PB better, including an outreach guide, curriculum for PB in schools, an implementation manual, and the white paper Next Generation Democracy.

We supported movements for social change. We partnered with national and international organizations working for racial justice, healthy communities, and youth voice, helping them use PB to build power and democracy.

After a year of growth, now is the time to take this work to the next level. PB is no longer an experiment. We know that it works. It should be a core part of every government - in schools, universities, public housing, cities, states, and federal agencies.

With your support, this future is possible. Together, we can build a more participatory and inclusive democracy.

Thank you for joining us!

Josh Lerner
Executive Director & Co-Founder
What is Participatory Budgeting?

PB is a democratic process in which community members decide how to spend part of a public budget. It gives ordinary people real decision-making power over real money.

The city of Porto Alegre, Brazil started the first full PB process in 1989. Since then, PB has spread to over 3,000 cities around the world, and has been used by counties, states, housing authorities, schools, universities, and other institutions. PBP launched the first PB process in the US in 2009.

PB involves an annual cycle of public meetings and voting, integrated into the broader budget decision-making process. Each community adapts PB to its needs, but it generally follows these steps:

**Design the process**
A steering committee, representative of the community, creates the rules in partnership with government officials to ensure the process is inclusive and meets local needs.

**Brainstorm ideas**
Through meetings and online tools, residents share and discuss ideas for projects.

**Fund winning projects**
The government implements the winning projects, such as laptops in schools, Wi-Fi in public parks, or traffic safety improvements. The government and residents track and monitor implementation.

**Develop proposals**
Volunteers, usually called budget delegates, develop the ideas into feasible proposals, which are then vetted by experts.

**Vote**
Residents vote to divide the available budget between the proposals. It’s a direct, democratic voice in their community’s future.

PB is the world’s longest running, most widespread innovation in participatory democracy.
Our Work

NETWORK BUILDING
We bring together diverse practitioners and organizers to help PB grow.

4th International Conference on PB in North America
In May 2016 at the Harvard Kennedy School and community sites around Boston, we brought together more than 235 PB practitioners, organizers, researchers, technologists, and officials from around the world to discuss best practices and build new relationships.

North American PB Network
We launched a peer-to-peer learning and collaboration network of North American cities and institutions implementing PB.

Partnering for Social Change
We helped over a dozen national and international organizations to use PB to support their work.

Oakland CDBG
We coordinated the first PB process for federal funds in two City Council Districts in Oakland, CA. More than 1,200 residents decided how to allocate $784,678 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), to boost economic and community development in low-income communities.

Phoenix High Schools
We helped implement the first school district-level PB process in the US. 3,854 students at five public high schools in Phoenix, AZ decided how to spend $26,000.

PBP’s WORK:
- Inspiring PB
- Supporting PB Organizing
- Supporting PB Implementation
Advocacy for PB in the South
Thanks to funding from the Fund for Democratic Communities, PBP is supporting PB advocacy efforts in over a dozen cities in the Southern US. We are training local leaders to organize for PB, and assisting policymakers interested in using PB as a tool for community power.

PBNYC
Since 2011, we have provided technical assistance for PBNYC, the largest PB process in the US. In the 2016-17 cycle, more than 102,000 residents in 31 City Council districts decided how to spend over $40 million.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & TRAINING
We help governments, institutions, and organizations implement PB processes and campaigns.

PARTICIPATION LAB
We research and develop new tools and practices to make PB and democracy work better.

PB in Schools Guide
Features 18 lessons and six worksheets to help jump-start PB processes, and has been accessed by over 650 people.

Outreach Toolkit
A guide for organizers and city staff on how to make PB more equitable and reflective of community needs.

White Paper: Next Generation Democracy
An introduction for elected officials on how to use PB for innovative, effective, and fair leadership. Has been distributed to over 1,250 advocates and leaders.

PB Implementation Manual
A how-to guide that includes more than 50 tools, templates, and best practices.

For additional tools visit participatorybudgeting.org/resources
Impacts

This year we expanded PB to a record number of cities, people, and dollars. We also deepened PB’s impacts on individuals, communities, and governments.

101,000 People engaged in democracy

$51.86 Million invested in communities

60 PB Processes

Broader Participation

“According to a new report from Public Agenda, it’s working: In most communities’ PB voter demographic surveys, residents from lower-income communities were over-represented or represented on par with census data. In nearly all communities, black voters were over-represented or on par with census data. On gender, 62 percent of surveyed PB voters overall were women. Also... all jurisdictions allowed residents and resident business owners to vote in PB regardless of citizenship status.”

- Oscar Abello, "Participatory Budgeting Reaches Historically Disenfranchised Neighbors,” Next City

Data Source: Public Agenda
Civic Education

“If there are any schools or districts across the country that are thinking about doing school PB, in our opinion it’s a no-brainer. If our job is to create great citizens, how better than to have them act as citizens?”

- Dr. Chad Gestson, Superintendent, Phoenix Union High School District

Policy Reforms

Years of ad-hoc PB proposals to renovate bathrooms and install air conditioning in New York City schools sparked city-wide campaigns to increase funding for these neglected needs. The bottom-up campaigns led to city-wide policy changes, directing $180 million in additional city funding to school bathrooms and air conditioning!

Innovative Projects

Mobile homeless showers: This year, PBNYC participants voted to allocate $60,000 to funding the city’s first mobile shower stations. The cleaning service will be located outside of a Brooklyn soup kitchen, allowing 150-200 daily guests to wash before receiving their meals.
Team

In 2016, PBP expanded to meet the growing demand for PB across North America. We welcomed nine new staff, launched a new website, and expanded into a new Brooklyn office. Our team includes talented and passionate people in New York (our main office), Oakland, Chicago, Greensboro, and Madison, who are proud to be transforming democracy every day.

Staff

NEW YORK
Josh Lerner, Executive Director
Jennifer Godzeno, Deputy Director
David Beasley, Communications Director
Melissa Appleton, East Coast Project Manager
Lize Mogel, Development Manager
Hadassah Damien, Manager of Engagement Technology
Naïyma Holmes, Operations Manager
Harvir Kaur, Individual Giving Coordinator
Rossanna Mercedes, Volunteer Coordinator
Lila Barrett, Development & Communications Associate
Giselle Blanco-Santana, Executive Assistant

OAKLAND
Shari Davis, Director of Strategic Initiatives
Ginny Browne, West Coast Project Manager
Roselyn Berry, Community Engagement Coordinator
Solaire Spellen, Program Associate
Ashley Brennan, Program Associate

FIELD STAFF
Maria Hadden, Midwest and South Project Manager - Chicago, IL
Valerie Warren, Community Engagement Coordinator - Greensboro, NC
Jake Carlson, Research Fellow - Madison, WI

Board of Directors

Michael Menser (Chair), Brooklyn College, City University of New York - New York City, NY
Vishal Gujadhur (Treasurer), Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation - Washington, DC
Alina Chatterjee (Secretary), Scadding Court Community Centre - Toronto, CA
Silaka Cox, Rockaway Youth Task Force - New York City, NY
Biola Jeje, American Postal Workers - Washington, DC
Joey Lake, ZEISS - Vallejo, CA
Joe Moore, Chicago City Council - Chicago, IL
Christopher Wilson, The Bement School - Deerfield, MA
2016 Revenues | $1,345,000

- Foundation Grants: $1,025,000 (77%)
- Contracts: $242,000 (18%)
- Events, Trainings, & Other: $45,000 (3%)
- Individual Giving: $34,000 (2%)

2016 Expenses | $1,211,000

- Technical Assistance: $477,000 (39%)
- Participation Lab: $87,000 (7%)
- Network Building: $171,000 (14%)
- Management & General: $365,000 (30%)
- Development: $122,000 (10%)
Our Supporters

FOUNDATIONS

Democracy Fund
The California Endowment
The James Irvine Foundation
Rita Allen Foundation
State Infrastructure Fund
New York Women’s Foundation
New York Foundation
The JPB Foundation
Fund for Democratic Communities
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Akonadi Foundation
McCormick Foundation*
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation*
Annie E. Casey Foundation
Lily Auchincloss Foundation
Crown Family Philanthropies*

GOVERNMENT

City of Boston
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City of Vallejo
City of Victoria
City University of New York
New York City Council
New York City Council Member Ben Kallos
New York City Council Member Brad Lander
New York City Council Member Mark Levine
New York City Council Member Carlos Menchaca
New York City Council Member Deborah Rose
New York City Council Member Ritchie Torres
Phoenix Union High School District

INSTITUTIONS

Harvard University - Ash Center for Democratic Governance
Davenport Institute for Public Engagement and Civic Leadership
Swedish Association of Local Authorities
CARTO

*=support received through partner organization
DONORS DECIDE: PB²
PBP practices what we preach. Each year, in a PB process we call "PB squared", we invite all of our donors to decide how a portion of their donations is spent.

We start by asking for ideas on how to improve and expand PB. Our PB Amplifiers supporter board develops the ideas into projects, in consultation with PBP staff. Our donors then vote for their top projects, and we implement the projects with the most votes.

2016 Winning Projects
PB in Schools Video | $10,000 | 3-5 minute video on how schools can use PB to engage students and the school community in deciding how to spend part of the school budget.

Data for Delegates | $8,000 | An online civic data and research resource, to be used by PB budget delegates, who play a key role in determining what projects best meet community needs.

2015 Winning Projects
Outreach Toolkit for Community Organizing in PB
Guide to PB in Schools
Online Tools for Asking Local Officials to Launch PB

At our 2016 NYC benefit we honored the New York Women’s Foundation, the Fortune Society, and Joan Bakiriddin
Boston City staff and youth leaders coordinate their city-wide youth PB process.