



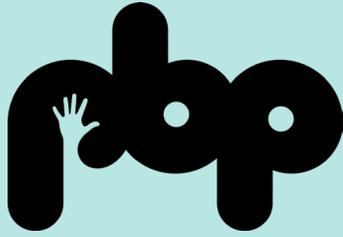
PARTICIPATORY
BUDGETING PROJECT

ANNUAL REPORT



2021





*Real Money.
Real Power.*

OUR MISSION

We work with communities across the US and Canada to decide together how to spend public money. We create and support participatory budgeting (PB) processes that deepen democracy, build stronger communities, and make public budgets more equitable and effective.



OUR WORK



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

We provide direct support to PB processes in order to grow and improve PB. We train governments, schools, organizations, and residents, empowering them to implement high-impact processes.



PARTICIPATION LAB

We develop and test innovative strategies, design solutions, and civic engagement tools that make PB easier and more effective.



CAMPAIGNS & ADVOCACY

We build relationships with government officials and staff, organizers, and researchers to increase demand and support for PB.

\$400M

in public funding
allocated through
PB

739K

PB participants
across the US &
Canada.

800+

Community PB
processes

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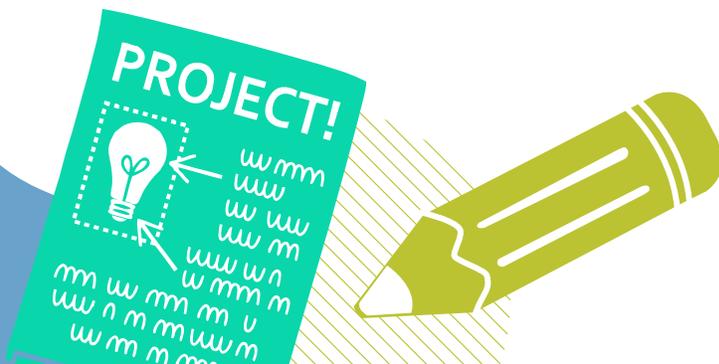
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Letter from the Co-EDs



Dear Community,

This last year has demanded unprecedented levels of learning, growth and care from us all. As an organization committed to transforming democracy, we have likewise made internal transformations that reflect our values. **For the first time in our organization's brief, but eventful, history, we are writing to you as three Co-EDs** who are sharing and building power with a growing team.

Taking care of our team doesn't start or stop with a global pandemic. It means fostering community care that leaves space for learning and growing together. As a team, we have started to create a new strategic plan to guide our mission of seeing community members most excluded from traditional decision-making shape budgets, policies, and decisions that impact their lives. We welcomed new staff and partnerships. We took moments to pause, slow down, and reflect. We have acknowledged and learned from mistakes, while still taking time to dream big and be ambitious.

For us, reckoning with hard truths has meant embarking on a journey of interrogating white supremacy culture, including where and how it shows up in our organization. In an effort to eradicate these characteristics from our practices, we've taken a critical eye to our internal structure and operations. We've taken note of how systems of oppression are detrimental to our individual and collective growth, hinder our community from thriving, and prevent safety and a sense of belonging. We are committed to ensuring that every aspect of our organization mirrors our vision and values. And we will continue to work toward this goal and evolve as we learn lessons along the way.

As the PBP team prepares for the release of our new strategic plan in 2022, centering equity, transparency and transformation have been our guides. At the heart of every project we undertake is the desire to center equity, collaboration, and accessibility in expanding participatory democracy. Over the past year, as a community of advocates, we have:

- **Continued to acquire community control over budgets**, affirming that carceral systems do not provide the safety that investing in care and access to life-affirming resources does.
- **Sought to hold ourselves accountable** as an institution with privilege, to invest more of our philanthropic resources into local leaders seeking to create local change.
- **Invited new allies into our work** through co-creating new resources to help make participatory democratic practices easier and more equitable.
- **Launched a national coalition-led campaign** to ensure [American Rescue Plan Act funds are allotted by community members](#) most in need of COVID recovery support.

One thing we have learned over the last year is that anticipating what is next can be hard, but it is a necessary step in building road maps and action plans toward a future that is just, equitable and accessible for us all. **Now is the time for us all to work together to determine how we move forward and invest in what we want to build together**, whether through partnership, power-building, or collective decision-making.

We hope that you will join on as we build together to shape our future. We look forward to working alongside partners like you to strengthen participatory democracy and people's power to make decisions on that which affects their lives the most.

Thank you for investing in the possibility of what's next!

Kristina Banks, Kristania De Leon, Shari Davis

Co-Executive Directors, Participatory Budgeting Project



2021 Highlights

For more highlights and a timeline of PBP's work throughout 2021 and beyond, please visit: <https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/2021-impact-report/>



GREW COMMUNITY CONTROL OVER BUDGETS,

Through the spread of COVID-19 and uprisings for economic transparency and justice across the United States, there have been increased nationwide demands for community control over public funds. PBP has continued to work nationally to educate community leaders about PB, how it can meet their local needs, educate formal decision-makers about participatory frameworks, and collaborate with partners to advance their goals to make Participatory decision-making a reality in their communities

JUSTICE-FOCUSED ADVOCACY

We vastly expanded our advocacy support around budget justice and are currently supporting over 20 cities in their divest/invest efforts through 1:1 consultations, city-wide workshops and trainings, communications and materials support, strategy and education sessions, and more. The largest instance of this work is in Seattle where their City Council voted to divest funds from the Seattle Police Department and move these funds into a larger pool of funds totaling [\\$30 million for PB](#). Read more on the Seattle process in [The Appeal](#).

PB SEEDS, SPROUTING IN LA!

In June, LA County Supervisors voted to close the Men's Central Jail after strong local advocacy pushing for alternatives to incarceration. LA was a PB seeds participant. PBP worked with county level departments including, the Department of Racial Equity, juvenile justice Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI), and Re-Entry Health Advisory Collaborative (RHAC), and local organizations to put forward a strong vision for PB as part of the next step for closure of Men's Central jail and across county spending for ATI investments. This work is now being repurposed by other municipalities, and ReImagine LA and others are increasing demands for PB in their ongoing advocacy as a result of our county-level advocacy. In 2022, there will be city-level PB with \$10M in LA and PBP will continue to partner with city and county advocates to expand PB in LA!

ANNOUNCED NEW ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CO-EDS

Following our 10-year anniversary, we worked collaboratively to gain alignment on our shared vision for PBP's structure and culture. We tapped into our experiences and practice of participatory budgeting and led with the strongly held belief that we can do more, get further, and build stronger relationships when we work together. The whole PBP team was excited to announce our new organizational structure and our Co-Executive Directors — three visionary leaders who bring their passion, immense gifts, and experience to forge a path forward.





**OUR RECOVERY,
OUR PRIORITIES**

THE DEMOCRACY BEYOND ELECTIONS COALITION GROWS

We are excited to share that we have grown our coalition fivefold to 27 partners strong, with emerging collaborations including with Black movement builders across the country. Visit the DBE website to see our [full list of partners](#) and to learn more about what we've been up to, including developing the [participatory policy-making model](#) that we hope to see in the world!

ADVOCATING FOR A COMMUNITY-LED RECOVERY

This fall, the Democracy Beyond Elections coalition launched a campaign to advocate for community control over funds being distributed under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Read our [explainer on ARPA](#) to learn more. We also put out an RFP to offer grants to groups working to equitably allocate funds through participatory processes. We have 8 amazing awardees receiving \$10k each to carry out their work, in addition to shared learning and capacity building opportunities. [Learn more](#) about what these organizations have planned!

PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP IMMERSSES YOUNG PEOPLE IN PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

After a successful pilot of a remote, youth-led participatory budgeting process called "[It's Our Money](#)", funding was approved for another year of the program in the Mayor's FY22 budget! The People's Fellowship immerses young people across NYC in best practices for participatory democracy, developing interpersonal leadership skills, and applying their knowledge in real-world scenarios. Fellows partner with the Civic Engagement Commission to design & pilot engagement strategies for '2021-22' participatory budgeting, moderate their civic engagement platform, pilot interventions to increase the percentage of community board members under the age of 25, and increase the visibility of civic engagement and voting rights resources in multiple languages.

PB FOR ORGS UPDATED TOOLKIT AND 2021 COHORT!

We developed a [PB for Organizations toolkit](#) as a direct response to partners in DBE calling to learn more about internal PB processes—centering members, supporters, staff, and partners as decision-makers over organizational funding.

We are now working directly with a couple organizations on implementation, hosted a PB 101 with the Highlander Center, and this fall we launched a learning and planning [cohort](#) for non profit organizations to plan, design and execute PB inside of their organizations. Looking towards 2022, we will be hosting more trainings and sharing an updated version of the toolkit, so stay tuned!



What's next

As we look ahead, we are excited to co-build the next iteration of our work. Here's how we are investing in what's next with our partners:



New strategic vision with an equity lens



New models of shared leadership



Participatory pilots that will transform how governments work



More PB and community decision-making at the local, state, and federal level

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

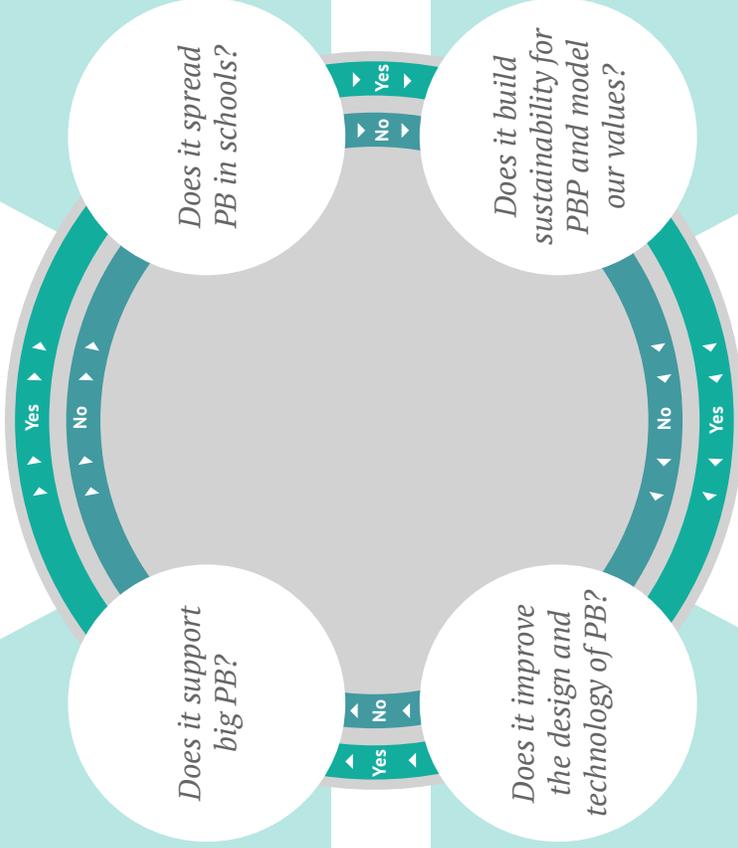
Direction 1

Expand public power over larger budgets and decisions, to increase civic engagement and equity.

Success is:

- New and existing PB processes increase the amount of money and issues that residents can decide.
- Large-scale equitable PB processes raise the bar for civic engagement, inspiring governments to open up bigger decisions to residents.
- More prominent officials, organizations, and funders focused on equity and democracy support PB and win commitments for participatory democracy programs.

When you're thinking of a new potential project, idea or inquiry – how do you know if it supports PBPP's strategic directions? The chart below has reflection questions you can use to help decide whether it fulfill the goal/s of one or more strategic directions.



Direction 3

Improve the design and technology of participatory budgeting and democracy, to enable equitable and empowering civic engagement to spread more widely.

Success is:

- Government officials and staff can run more equitable, empowering, and streamlined civic engagement processes.
- PBPP's technical assistance and resources deliver more value to government officials, staff, advocates, and community members.

Direction 2

Spread participatory budgeting in schools, to inspire a new generation of leaders to grow participatory and equitable democracy in the long term.

Success is:

- High-profile school PB programs are successful and equitable models that inspire similar processes elsewhere.
- More school district leaders learn about, become interested in, and launch PB processes.

Direction 4

Build a sustainable organization that models our values, to attract and retain amazing staff and board members.

Success is:

- We have a healthy reserve that supports financial stability.
- We regularly improve staff compensation, benefits, and professional development.
- We sustain a supportive organizational culture and management that reflect our values.

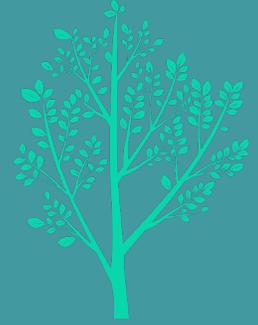
Instructions:
Start on whichever question you would like, looking at the measures for success. Move around the circle to each direction to see whether it potentially supports more than one strategic direction.

Key - # of times you answered Yes:

- 0 This might not be the project for PBPP.
- 1-2 This is a viable thing.
- 3 We should definitely pursue this.
- 4 This is going to revolutionize PBPP!



Thank you to our partners



This work is made possible through deep and meaningful partnerships from organizations and individuals from around the country. Thank you for dreaming, ideating, and building together.

Partners

Advancement Project California
Center for Popular Democracy
City of Grand Rapids, MI
Coalition for a People's Budget
Coalition for People's Safety and Freedom
[Democracy Beyond Elections Coalition Partners](#)
Decriminalize Seattle
Defund Fellowship Program - Community Resource Hub
Inclusive Data and the Black Brilliance Project
King County Equity Now
Libraries 4 All St. Louis
Los Angeles Men's Central Jail closure campaign
Los Angeles Reentry Health Advisory Collaborative (RHAC)
Movement for Black Lives (M4BL)
[PB for Orgs Cohort](#)
Policy Link
Reclaim the Block, MN
Reimagine Los Angeles Coalition
The African-American Roundtable, MN

Funders

Borealis
Butler Family Fund
Democracy Fund
Ford Foundation
Mertz Gilmore Foundation
Open Society Foundations
The California Endowment
The JPB Foundation

Advisory Board Committee

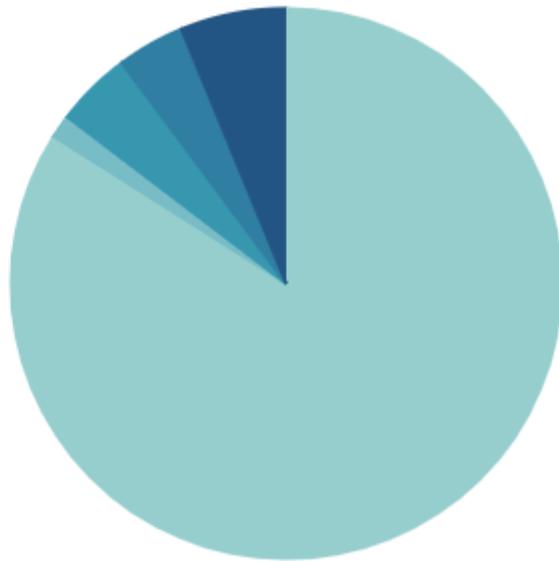
David Beasley | Auburn Seminar
Alina Chatterjee | Scadding Court Community Centre
Jez Hall | PB Partners, UK
Alexander Kolokotronis | Yale University
Matt Leighninger | Public Agenda
Aseem Mulji | University of California Berkeley
Whitney Quesenbery | Center for Civic Design
Erin Sanborn
Celina Su | City University of New York

Financials

January 1, 2021-December 31, 2021 (unaudited financials)



Income

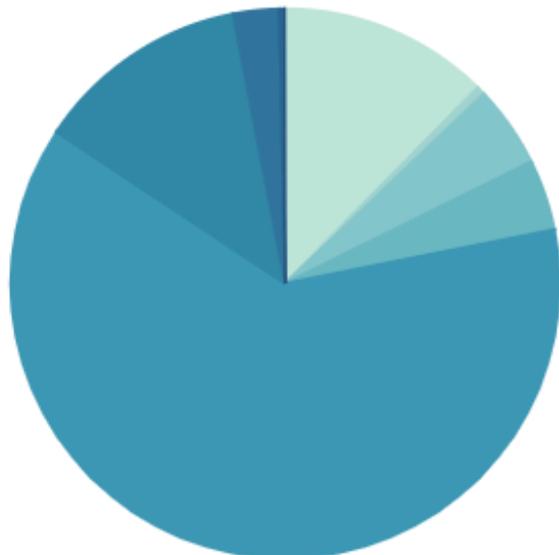


Income

- Corporate Contributions
- Foundation Contributions
- Individual Contributions
- Non-Profit Contribution
- Other Income
- Program Service Fees
- Special Events
- State and Local Contracts

Income: \$756,967

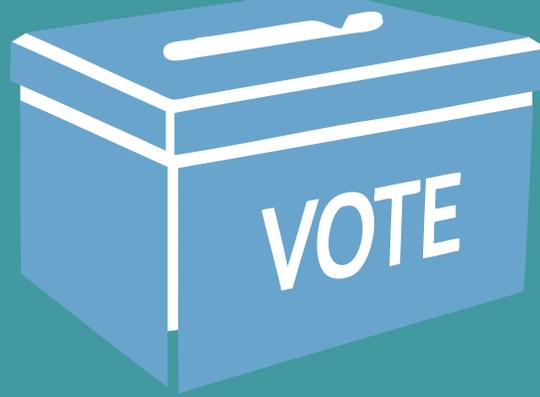
Expenses



Expenses

- Contract Services
- Insurance
- Occupancy
- Office Expenses
- Other Expenses
- Payroll Expense
- Payroll Taxes & Benefits
- Professional Services
- Staff Development
- Travel and Meetings

Expenses: \$939,856



PARTICIPATORY
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