

May 7, 2012

Board Members:

Enclosed are the materials for our May 17-18th Board meeting at OSI's offices (400 W. 59th Street). Our discussions at this meeting are designed to provide direction to the staff in the preparation of the US Programs budget for 2013. The staff will work over the summer to develop a program and budget that reflects the results of last summer's mid-term review, our discussions at board meetings since last summer, our workgroup process and our ongoing board and staff deliberations. During the summer, Chris Stone, Geoffrey Canada and I will constitute the Board's Program and Budget Committee. We will serve as a resource to the staff and Executive Director as they develop the USP program and budget.

I'd like to thank each of you for the time and energy you devoted to our workgroup process. I am well aware of the deep intrusion this effort made into your very busy schedules. I think you'll agree that our discussions have been illuminating, engaging and helpful in developing our thinking about the future direction of USP. While our workgroup discussions are not yet completed,¹ board and staff co-chairs from each group will report back at the board meeting on the group's deliberations and seek board input on outstanding questions and direction. We've allotted ample time for discussion after each workgroup presentation. To maximize the effective use of that time, I insist that each of you read carefully the five workgroup memos before the board meeting. The staff has worked hard with the board member co-chairs of each group to keep the memos to a reasonable length so that you may digest them before we meet.

A feature of this board meeting is that we have invited guests from each workgroup to join us for part of our board meeting. This should invigorate our board deliberations with the perspectives of key outside thought leaders who have engaged in the workgroup process with us. A list of outside guests is included in your materials.

The board meeting will begin on the morning of the 17th with an update from the Executive Director Search. Amy Yenkin, who has been assisting us with the search process, will join us for this portion of the meeting. We will be in Executive Session for this discussion. After our Executive Session, George Soros will lead a brief discussion based on ideas presented in the first chapters of his book, *THE AGE OF FALLIBILITY*, which was circulated to you over the weekend.

Thereafter we will begin with a presentation from the Board member and staff co-chairs of each work group. We will address the results of the Justice workgroup, and Race & Marginalized Population workgroup on Thursday morning. Our lunch will be a working lunch. After lunch, the discussion of the work of the Public Sphere workgroup will begin with a compelling presentation by board member Yochai Benkler entitled, "Mapping the Networked Public Sphere." This presentation will highlight one aspect of the public sphere, through Prof. Benkler's analysis of the complex media, internet and activist influence in the recent defeat of

¹ All groups expect to continue their discussions over small dinners and meetings during the early part of the summer. In this regard, we will continue to develop our thinking and ideas about the work of our core areas of focus.

the SOPA legislation. Our discussion will then take up the broader, fuller range of public sphere issues with which that workgroup has been engaged.

Late in the afternoon we will discuss the selection of core grantees for USP support. We will also brief the USP board on changes to the OSPC board, and the creation of an OSPC Domestic Advisory Committee.

On Friday morning we have reserved time for board or staff members to update the board on any emergent open society issues that may require our attention. Please let me or Diana Morris know if you would like to present such an issue to the board at this time. If there are no such issues for presentation, we will proceed and take up the work of the Thinking/Idea Innovation group and the Economic Equity and Jobs sub-group. We'll conclude the meeting with proposed next steps.

Thanks again to all of you for your full participation in the work of this board. I look forward to seeing you next week.

Sincerely,
Sherrilyn A. Ifill
USP Board Chair