

**Report of the U.S. Programs**  
**Open Society Thinking/Idea Innovation Working Group**  
**May 7, 2012**

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The Open Society Thinking/Idea Innovation working group has been charged with recommending new structures and practices that will ensure that U.S. Programs is constantly refreshed and informed by a wide range of sharp and forward-thinking people and ideas across and beyond our core programmatic focus areas. This working group is likely to become a permanent fixture within U.S. Programs, although its composition and form will change over time.

**Working group co-chairs:** Lenny Benardo, Leon Botstein, Steve Coll, Sherrilyn Ifill, Lori McGlinchey, Andy Stern

**OSF Board and staff members:** Yochai Benkler, Deepak Bhargava, Tim Dorsey, Erlin Ibreck, Diana Morris, Aryeh Neier, Steve Rickard, Laura Silber, Andrea Soros Colombel, Bryan Stevenson, Bill Vandenberg, Ethan Zuckerman, with research support from Katie Barnett

**Outside experts:** Rick Hertzberg, a senior editor and staff writer at The New Yorker; Joseph Stiglitz, University Professor at Columbia University in New York and Nobel Peace Prize winning economist; Alexis McGill Johnson, executive director of the American Values Institute.

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**Questions to be addressed at the U.S. Programs May 17-18 Board Meeting:**

- Over the next few months, U.S. Programs will welcome a new director. The overall working group process may lead to changes in the organizational structure of U.S. Programs. In addition, Chris Stone is likely to enact structural changes across OSF. Given these sequencing challenges, what are the board's expectations for this working group? How can this working group best serve as a vehicle to investigate and recommend new structures and practices to support idea innovation within U.S. Programs?
- How can the staff and board best manage the volume of emerging ideas and make strategic decisions about which ideas or emerging areas of interest to pursue? What process should be established and who will be responsible for making these decisions?

## I. Process and Discussion Topics

The working group has had two meetings to date, and has used the following questions as a starting point for discussion:

*What subject areas of OSI core or related work do you think are ripe for inquiry and investigation, and how do we identify the most talented people or organizations working in those areas? Where does the most interesting experimentation in idea generation take place?*

Over the course of two meetings, the working group returned several times to the domains of media, science, and technology. We noted the extent to which scientists and technologists are pursuing lines of inquiry that are upending the assumptions on which public policy and law are based, and opening up new opportunities for social and political change. For example, there has been a sharp increase in the use of technology and digital communications to create productive new relationships between citizens and government, even as issues including affordable access, freedom of speech, privacy, and control remain highly unsettled.

Universities such as MIT and Stanford are drawing scientists and engineers into broader discussions of public life and public policy. Although efforts to cross-fertilize public policy and science do not always work, when they do, it is often very fresh and forward thinking, and OSF should be connected to these efforts in some way. The group expressed interest in considering a range of examples of idea innovation<sup>1</sup> such as the Public Media Accelerator, a joint initiative of the Knight Foundation and the Public Radio Exchange, an OSF grantee. The Public Media Accelerator is modeled on mentorship-driven technology startup investment accelerators, and is charged with identifying mission-driven entrepreneurs and inventive ideas that have the potential to transform and expand the field of public media. Several working group members expressed interest in bringing U.S. Programs into closer contact with entrepreneurs from the business sector.

During the first working group meeting, Rick Hertzberg was invited to identify a subject area that might be ripe for inquiry. Hertzberg outlined the problems associated with the current Electoral College system, which tends to establish and entrench political inequality. Hertzberg described the idea of a National Popular Vote<sup>2</sup> plan, which could increase voter turnout and

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<sup>1</sup> Other examples: **Code for America**, which has also just launched an accelerator: “The past few decades have seen staggering advances in technology, but government has been left behind, saddled with outdated and inefficient software, while costs have exploded into the hundreds of billions. There is both the imperative and the market for new, disruptive startups. The Code for America Accelerator will “turbo-charge” select civic startups by providing access to a wealth of business training and advice, and connections to a broad network of potential investors and civic leaders.” **The Knight Foundation’s News Challenge** is a contest that aims to accelerate innovation in news and information by funding the best new ideas and supporting them through its network of peers and advisors. Knight is looking for projects that use the best of existing software and platforms – those already integrated into people’s lives – to find new ways to convey news and information to the public.

<sup>2</sup> The National Popular Vote plan refers to a bill that, when enacted, would guarantee the Presidency to the candidate who receives the most popular votes in the entire United States. The bill will preserve the Electoral College while also ensuring that every vote, in every state, will matter in every presidential election. Under the National Popular Vote bill, all the electoral votes from the enacting states would be awarded to the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states (and DC). The bill would take effect only when enacted by states possessing a majority of the electoral votes (270 of 538). To date, the bill has been enacted by nine jurisdictions possessing 132 electoral votes – 49% of the 270 necessary to activate it.

reduce the power of money and its influence in politics. Hertzberg suggested that there are opportunities for states to serve as true laboratories of democracy. The group discussed public education/awareness strategies related to the National Popular Vote, and possible allies.

Recognizing the limited time available, the working group focused on structural and operational questions rather than on the questions related to identifying other specific subject areas that we might consider for future investigation. One area that the U.S. Programs Board previously flagged for additional exploration is the role of faith and religion in public life.

***How do we develop the most efficient and effective ways to bring in and engage with new talent and ideas, including contrarians?***

The group discussed the importance of developing practices and structures that enable us to engage with a wide range of people across the political and social spectrum outside the foundation who can challenge and sharpen our thinking. The group agreed on the importance of engaging with contrarians — people who may challenge our assumptions and force us to be clear about our goals and strategies. The group defined contrarians not as those who directly oppose our open society values; rather, contrarians are those who may approach open society issues in a different way.

We noted that John Koza, who originated the idea of the National Popular Vote, is a computer scientist who co-invented the scratch-off instant lottery ticket. An important challenge for the working group is to figure out how we can regularly bring OSF into closer contact with the kinds of people who are inventing scratch-off lottery tickets and then converting that into insight about Electoral College reform. How do we develop an open-ended source of contact with a wide range of innovators, some of whom may be innovating through the process of science and technology but who may not necessarily be connecting that with the potential for the development of political or civic ideas?

There was enthusiasm about the idea of finding ways in which scientists and technologists can contribute to policy discussions. A working group member observed (via email) that a way in which foundations could take better advantage of these skillsets is to frame well-defined questions. Left to their own devices, scientists and engineers can often approach social policy questions from a fairly uninformed and naive standpoint. Helping smart people outside a field understand what's known, what's unknown, and where innovative thinking would be particularly helpful is a technique U.S. programs might consider.

Lenny Benardo described the Open Society Fellowship Program, which has many of the same goals as this working group. In three years, this Program has supported 38 fellows who are addressing fundamental open society challenges in innovative and unconventional ways. The Program seeks “idea entrepreneurs” who are ready to challenge conventional wisdom and who can see beyond the parochialisms of their field. A fellowship project might identify a problem that has not previously been recognized, develop new policy ideas to address familiar problems, or offer a new advocacy strategy. Fellows are encouraged to take advantage of the considerable resources of the Open Society Foundations and are expected to contribute meaningfully to the Foundations' thinking in return. Fellows participate in public events, strategic seminars, internal

staff discussions, etc. Lenny explained that the Program is interested in productive friction – it is looking for people who question and challenge some of our conceits, cherished wisdoms, and assumptions. The greatest successes of the Open Society Fellowship Program have happened when staff and fellows find a mutuality of interest. A major challenge of the Program is how to facilitate meaningful and productive connections among fellows and often over-taxed OSF staff.

The Open Society Fellowship Program aims to facilitate the development of ideas by creating opportunities for debate, provocation, deliberation, and rational discourse. Lenny Benardo cautioned the group that the Program is labor intensive; it requires a great deal of sustained effort and staff time to integrate fellows into the OSF network and create these opportunities for discussion. It has proven to be difficult for OSF staff across the network to find the time to engage with fellows in the crush of daily work. Over the course of two working group meetings, an important and recurring point was that structural and cultural changes are needed to ensure that staff are able to engage with fellows – either through the existing Open Society Fellowship program or through any new U.S. Programs fellowship initiatives we may develop in the future.

***How can we sensibly institutionalize various processes of generating and developing, and then supporting new ideas in U.S. Programs?***

The working group could not conclusively answer this question in the available time, but identified several areas for further inquiry and defined the conditions that must exist in order for any new ideas initiative to be successful:

- We must first understand all the ways that program staff is already engaged in identifying and supporting idea innovation within the core program areas. Then we can identify areas of improvement and replicable practices. There is a plan in place to gather this information.
- U.S. Programs leadership must create a culture that prioritizes idea innovation as an important part of the job for every member of the program staff, not just for a team of people working in a separate idea innovation lab or workshop.
- U.S. Programs must be structured in a way that ensures core program staff has the space to think, communicate, and explore new ideas, and the resources to effectively serve as “idea scouts” for U.S. Programs. The internal structure must also facilitate information sharing across the different program areas.
- U.S. Programs leadership should develop stronger formal and informal connections with the Open Society Fellowship Program, the Soros Justice Fellowship Program, and the Baltimore Community Fellowships Program, as well as other international programs, in order to identify opportunities for collaboration. This is already taking place episodically at the program staff level, usually because of personal relationships.
- Program staff should make more time to engage with the ideas that are generated by the think tanks, research institutions, and other organizations that receive grants to develop new ideas.

## II. Areas of Consensus and Contention

The working group acknowledged an important tension in U.S. Programs: staff and board have recognized that each of the core program areas have extremely difficult and ambitious goals and, in some cases, may be working on too many issues. Staff and board both recognize that it is critical that the core program areas be focused and strategic, concentrating resources on the very big and challenging issues we have identified as core U.S. Programs concerns. However, there is also appetite for ongoing engagement with new ideas and issue areas, even if only for a short period of time. We must reconcile the need for discipline and focus with the desire to build capacity in U.S. Programs to explore ideas outside of the core program areas, most likely through a new idea innovation initiative.

The group agreed that a new idea innovation lab or initiative would allow us to promote and to engage with ideas that do not fall into our main programs, but that are related and do very often touch, in very important ways, on the core areas where we work. For example, although now an area of focus in the Economic Equity working group, U.S. Programs' exploration of big ideas related to the changing economy and its effects on vulnerable individuals and communities has been quite limited to date. If we identify people who are developing promising and perhaps unorthodox ideas about how one might address, for example, the future of work, we need a mechanism to support that exploration. We should have the capacity to identify and prioritize new ideas, and a flexible set of practices in place to support the development of new thinking.

Other areas of consensus:

- Working group members stressed the importance of continuing our grantmaking to support idea innovation that is taking place in grantee organizations and that is independent of OSF. There is great value in our current grantmaking directed at a variety of large and small idea shops. However, we must develop better methods of ensuring that the ideas developed by grantee organizations have clear pathways back into OSF, and inform our broader work.
- The working group discussed the need to be clear about what we mean by an idea. In academic settings, an “idea” may tend to refer to a well-developed, full-blown plan, which may make it less likely that others will be motivated to engage in discussion. Working group members agreed that it is important to create open spaces for a range of people to present and struggle with ideas that are not fully developed. We should encourage discussion of the “half-baked” ideas, possibly through a workshop model.
- Idea innovation can serve as a check on our impulse to follow a known path. Having a separate idea innovation initiative and constantly being engaged with ideas that are not at the core of what we do, but which are related, will help us challenge and sharpen our thinking in and beyond our core program areas.
- There was recognition that much of the work of U.S. Programs is by necessity defensive work – we must push back against the negative and destructive, such as restrictive voter ID laws – which leaves less time and space to develop and promote an affirmative vision and new ideas, such as National Popular Vote. This working group might provide a useful space to think through these tensions; how much of our work should focus on

practical short term protection and change, and where should we disregard current political realities and develop a big vision for the long term?

- Several working group members noted the importance of connecting ideas to a range of different kinds of communities, especially at the regional and local levels.
- There was some discussion of the need to understand how ideas gain traction in the larger society.
- Working group members agreed that there would be value in identifying approaches we may not want to take, for example, major contests or prizes.
- We should develop mechanisms that ensure we are constantly asking ourselves what we do not know and that expose the deficiencies in our thinking in productive ways. We should encourage experimentation and risk taking. Where that is not already happening, we must understand why, and adjust the internal organizational culture and structure in response. Strong leadership within U.S. Programs is critical.

Although there was no area of strong contention, working group members raised several general concerns:

- There was no disagreement with the idea that there would be value in having a separate idea innovation initiative that could engage with issues not included in the core program areas. However several workgroup members expressed the view that there is a danger in designating one group of people as “idea innovators” and that idea innovation should be integrated throughout the core program areas, while several other working group members disagreed. They expressed the view that it is essential to maintain a dedicated idea innovation lab or initiative in part to help support and develop ideas that can challenge our programmatic focus and viewpoints.
- How do we guard against spreading our resources too thinly? OSF is an institution with an embarrassment of riches – of ideas, information, access to extraordinary people – and we need to establish processes that help the staff and board manage the volume of emerging ideas and make strategic decisions about which ideas might be particularly timely, or worthy of a campaign or other kinds of support, and which we may choose not to pursue.

### **III. Preliminary Goals**

Based on the discussions to date, the Open Society Thinking co-chairs have identified the following preliminary goals:

1. Build an organizational culture within U.S. Programs that places priority on and facilitates idea innovation as an important part of the job for every member of the program staff. Develop a culture that supports and rewards experimentation and risk taking.
2. Strengthen practices and build structures that enable U.S. Programs to engage with a wide range of people outside the foundation who can challenge and sharpen our thinking, including civic and private sector entrepreneurs. Develop ways to make sure we are

regularly interacting with contrarians who may be approaching open society challenges from a different perspective.

3. Explore the creation of a new idea innovation lab or initiative within U.S. Programs that adds new staff capacity and a flexible set of practices to identify, prioritize, and develop ideas that do not currently fall into the core program areas.

#### **IV. Next Steps and Questions**

Over the next few months the working group will continue its discussions and will address several areas flagged for follow-up, which include:

- Meetings and interviews with program staff in order to understand and document the range of “idea scouting” tools and practices already in place within U.S. Programs.
- A survey of various models that other institutions (Google, Knight, Code for America, etc.) have established to serve as idea innovation vehicles.
- Conversations with the OSF communications department and external practitioners and social scientists to better understand how ideas gain traction in many different kinds of communities.
- Engagement with staff from the Soros Justice Fellows Program and Baltimore Community Fellowships Program at a future working group meeting.
- Ongoing conversations with the Open Society Fellowship Program, which is already experimenting with a variety of approaches to create an idea innovation culture within OSF. Any new ideas initiative in U.S. Programs should be connected with the Fellowship Program.

We hope that the Board will address the following questions at the May meeting:

- Over the next few months, U.S. Programs will welcome a new director. The overall working group process may lead to changes in the organizational structure of U.S. Programs. In addition, Chris Stone is likely to enact structural changes across OSF. Given these sequencing challenges, what are the board’s expectations for this working group? How can this working group best serve as a vehicle to investigate and recommend new structures and practices to support idea innovation within U.S. Programs?
- How can the staff and board best manage the volume of emerging ideas and make strategic decisions about which ideas or emerging areas of interest to pursue? What process should be established and who will be responsible for making these decisions?

The Open Society Thinking/Idea Innovation working group will continue to gather information and develop more detailed recommendations over the summer. We look forward to feedback and questions from the Board.

**Open Society Foundations – U.S. Programs**  
**Open Society Thinking/Idea Innovation Working Group**  
**Member Biographies**

**Yochai Benkler, OSF U.S. Programs Board**

Yochai Benkler is the Berkman Professor of Entrepreneurial Legal Studies at Harvard, and faculty co-director of the Berkman Center for Internet and Society. Since the 1990s he has played a part in characterizing the role of information commons and decentralized collaboration to innovation, information production, and freedom in the networked economy and society. His books include *The Wealth of Networks: How social production transforms markets and freedom* (Yale University Press 2006), and *The Penguin and the Leviathan: How Cooperation Triumphs over Self-Interest* (Crown 2011).

His work is socially engaged, winning him the Electronic Frontier Foundation's Pioneer Award for 2007, Public Knowledge's IP3 Award in 2006, and the Ford Foundation Visionaries Award in 2011. It is also anchored in the realities of markets, having been cited as "perhaps the best work yet about the fast moving, enthusiast-driven Internet" by the Financial Times and named best business book about the future in 2006 by Strategy and Business. Benkler has produced reports or served in an advisory capacity for a range communications and intellectual property regulators and policy makers at the national and international levels. His work can be freely accessed at [www.benkler.org](http://www.benkler.org)

**Leonard Benardo, OSF U.S. Programs Staff, Working Group Co-Chair**

Bernardo has been at the Open Society Foundations since 1996. In that capacity he has overseen the Foundations' activities in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltics, Poland, and Hungary. In addition to directing the Open Society Fellowship, he currently oversees all Open Society grantmaking in Russia and is principal liaison to the Central European University. Prior to his work in New York, Benardo worked in the Moscow office of the Foundations. He has also taught history and Spanish in a NYC public high school. Benardo has written for the New York Times, New York Review of Books, and International Herald Tribune, and is the co-author of *Brooklyn by Name: How the Neighborhoods, Streets, Parks, Bridges, and More Got Their Names* (NYU Press, 2006) and *Citizen-in-Chief: The Second Lives of the American Presidents* (Harper, 2010).

**Deepak Bhargava, OSF U.S. Programs Board**

Deepak Bhargava is Executive Director of the Center for Community Change, a national non-profit organization whose mission is to develop the power and capacity of low-income people, especially low-income people of color, to change the policies and institutions that affect their lives. Bhargava is also the executive director of the Center's 501(c)(4) sister organization, the Campaign for Community Change. Under his leadership, CCC has played a leading role in campaigns to achieve universal health care coverage, improve jobs and safety net policies and advance comprehensive immigration reform.

Prior to his appointment as executive director in 2002, Bhargava served as the Center's Director of Public Policy. He has run numerous national campaigns that have resulted in significant improvements in the lives of low-income families. Bhargava has emerged as a leading progressive thinker and strategist, and has written and spoken widely about issues such as poverty, immigration, and community organizing, including influential articles in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Nation*, and *The American Prospect*. He currently serves on the boards of the Bauman Foundation, Discount Foundation, *The Nation* editorial board, the U.S. Programs Board for the Open Society Institute, and *Democracia Ahora*.

Born in Bangalore, India, Bhargava immigrated to the United States when he was a child. He grew up in New York City and graduated summa cum laude from Harvard College. He lives in Washington, D.C. with his partner Harry Hanbury, a documentary filmmaker.

### **Leon Botstein, OSF U.S. Programs Board, Working Group Co-Chair**

Botstein has been president of Bard College since 1975. He is also the Leon Levy Professor of the Arts and Humanities at Bard. He received his B.A. degree with special honors in history from the University of Chicago and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in European history from Harvard. He serves as chair of the board of the Central European University in Budapest and as board member of the Open Society Foundations.

Dr. Botstein has been the music director of the American Symphony Orchestra since 1992 and conducts the ASO's subscription concert series at Lincoln Center. In 2003, he was appointed the music director of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, the orchestra of the Israel Broadcast Authority. As an active international conductor, he makes frequent guest appearances with major orchestras around the world, and his recording with the London Symphony Orchestra of Popov's Symphony No. 1, Op. 7 was nominated for a 2006 Grammy Award.

Dr. Botstein is also editor of *The Musical Quarterly*. He has published over 100 articles and reviews on music, education, history, and culture. He was editor of *Quasi una Fantasia: Juden und die Musikstadt Wien*, published in 2003 by Wolke Verlag; an English translation, *Jews and the City of Vienna, 1870-1938*, was published in 2004 by Yale University Press. He also edited *The Compleat Brahms*, published in 1999 by Norton. He is author of *Jefferson's Children: Education and the Promise of American Culture*, published in 1997 by Doubleday. His book *Judentum und Modernität: Essays zur Rolle der Juden in der Deutschen und Österreichischen Kultur 1848-1938* was published in 1991 by Böhlau Verlag in Vienna; a Russian translation was published in 2003.

### **Steve Coll, OSF U.S. Programs Board, Working Group Co-Chair**

Coll is president of New America Foundation, and a staff writer for *The New Yorker* magazine. Previously he spent 20 years as a foreign correspondent and senior editor at *The Washington Post*, serving as the paper's managing editor from 1998 to 2004. He is the author of seven books including *The Deal of the Century: The Break Up of AT&T* (1986); *The Taking of Getty Oil* (1987); *Eagle on the Street*, based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning account of the SEC's battle with Wall Street (with David A. Vise, 1991); *On the Grand Trunk Road: A Journey into South Asia* (1994), *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan and Bin Laden, from the*

*Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001* (2004); *The Bin Ladens: An Arabian Family in the American Century* (2008); and *Private Empire: Exxon Mobil and American Power* (2012).

Mr. Coll's professional awards include two Pulitzer Prizes. He won the first of these, for explanatory journalism, in 1990, for his series, with David A. Vise, about the SEC. His second was awarded in 2005, for his book, *Ghost Wars*, which also won the Council on Foreign Relations' Arthur Ross award; the Overseas Press Club award and the Lionel Gelber Prize for the best book published on international affairs during 2004. Other awards include the 1992 Livingston Award for outstanding foreign reporting; the 2000 Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Award for his coverage of the civil war in Sierra Leone; and a second Overseas Press Club Award for international magazine writing. Mr. Coll graduated Phi Beta Kappa, Cum Laude, from Occidental College in 1980 with a degree in English and history.

### **Hendrik Hertzberg, Senior Editor and Staff Writer, The New Yorker magazine**

Hertzberg is a senior editor and staff writer at *The New Yorker*, where he frequently writes the Comment, in The Talk of the Town. Hertzberg originally joined *The New Yorker* as a Talk of the Town reporter in 1969, after serving as an officer in the U.S. Navy. After the 1976 Presidential election, he became a White House speechwriter under President Jimmy Carter. From 1981 until 1991, he was associated with *The New Republic*, serving two terms as its editor. During his second stint, between 1988 and 1991, *The New Republic* won three National Magazine Awards, including back-to-back awards for General Excellence. In 1992, he returned to *The New Yorker*. In 2006, his Comment essays won the National Magazine Award for Columns and Commentary. Hertzberg has also been a fellow of two institutes at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government: the Institute of Politics and the Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy. He is the author of *Politics: Observations & Arguments* (2004), *¡Obamanos!: The Birth of a New Political Era* (2009), and *One Million* (2009).

### **Erlin Ibreck, OSF U.S. Programs Staff**

Ibreck is the program director for the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) and currently acting deputy director of U.S. Programs. SOF is a core fund of U.S. Programs' and is discretionary in nature, responding to urgent and timely opportunities that impact issues relevant to the overall mission of U.S. Programs. In 2012 SOF is undertaking a discrete initiative that seeks to reduce the inappropriate and harmful use of suspensions, expulsions, and arrests in public schools in an effort to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline, and is building on momentum for policy reforms.

Prior to OSF Ibreck worked in the New York City Mayor's Office as a deputy Coordinator on adolescent issues. She has also worked in the UK criminal justice and family court systems as a probation officer before coming to the U.S. for her M.S. degree in social work. During her tenure at OSF Ibreck has developed a number of special initiatives including the New York Urban Initiative, OSF's post-Katrina rapid response initiatives including the Katrina Media Fellowship. For eight years she was the director of Youth Initiatives portfolios which included the Youth Media Program, the Urban Debate Program, and the New Century High Schools Initiative. Ibreck was born in Tanzania and raised in Uganda.

## **Sherrilyn Ifill, OSF U.S. Programs Board**

Professor Sherrilyn Ifill is nationally recognized as an advocate in the areas of civil rights, voting rights, judicial diversity and judicial decision-making. She teaches Civil Procedure, Legal Writing, and a seminar on Reparations, Reconciliation and Restorative Justice. Professor Ifill has also taught Constitutional Law, Environmental Justice, Complex Litigation, as well as seminars on Voting Rights, Equal Protection, and Judicial Decisionmaking. Professor Ifill co-founded with Professor Michael Pinard the Reentry of Ex-Offenders Clinic.

Professor Ifill writes about the importance of judicial diversity and impartiality in judicial decision-making. Her articles about race, judging and judicial selection have led to Professor Ifill's recognition as an expert on these subjects. She has appeared on NBC Nightly News as well as local network news broadcasts as a consultant and expert during recent Supreme Court confirmation hearings. Professor Ifill also writes about the history of racial violence and contemporary reconciliation efforts. Her book about truth and reconciliation commissions for lynching entitled, *On the Courthouse Lawn: Confronting the Legacy of Lynching in the 21st Century* was released by Beacon Books in February 2007.

Prior to joining the Faculty in 1993, Professor Ifill served as an Assistant Counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. in New York, where she litigated voting rights cases, including *Houston Lawyers' Association v. Texas*, in which the Supreme Court held that judicial elections are subject to the provisions of the Voting Rights Act. During her tenure at Maryland law school, Professor Ifill has continued to litigate and consult on cases on behalf of low-income and minority communities.

Professor Ifill is a frequent guest on The Marc Steiner Show, a public affairs program on WYPR, the Baltimore NPR affiliate, where she talks about race and the law, and her op-ed articles often appear in the *Baltimore Sun*, *Jurist*, and the *AFRO American* newspapers. As a voting rights expert, Professor Ifill appeared regularly as the election expert on BET News with Ed Gordon during the contested November 2000 presidential election, and continues to serve as a political and election analyst on local television and radio programs.

Professor Ifill serves as the Board Chair for the Open Society Foundations – U.S. Programs and is on the board of the Open Society Institute in Baltimore and the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore City. She is a member and Co-Director of the Children's Choir at Mt. Calvary African Methodist Episcopal Church in Towson, Maryland.

## **Alexis McGill Johnson, Executive Director, American Values Institute**

Johnson is the executive director of the American Values Institute, a consortium of researchers, educators, and social justice advocates focused on understanding the role of bias in our society. Previously she served as executive director of Citizen Change, a national nonprofit organization founded by Sean "P. Diddy" Combs to educate, motivate, and empower young eligible voters. Under Combs, she launched the Vote or Die! campaign, creating a new political model for reaching young people and people of color by mixing traditional grassroots mobilization with nontraditional consumer-based marketing methods. As a writer, political strategist, and organizer, she has explored shifting paradigms of identity politics in the post-civil rights era,

worked to increase civic engagement among young African Americans, and investigated the implications for demographic and ideological changes of this constituency on national politics. She serves as a private consultant to a variety of organizations, donors, and artists.

### **Lori McGlinchey, OSF U.S. Programs Staff, Working Group Co-Chair**

McGlinchey is a senior program officer with the Transparency Fund of the Open Society Foundations. She is responsible for grantmaking in media and information policy, journalism, access to information, and government transparency. Lori joined the Foundation in September 2000 and served as program officer for the Project on Death in America until the program closed in 2004. She has also served as assistant director of U.S. Programs and has developed special initiatives, including the 2006 Soros/Sundance Documentary Fund: A Tenth Anniversary Film Series, a retrospective of 19 human rights documentaries at the Film Forum in New York City.

She serves on the steering committee of the Media Democracy Fund and on the board of Grantmakers in Film and Electronic Media. Before OSF, Lori was director of programs for the National Yiddish Book Center [www.yiddishbookcenter.org](http://www.yiddishbookcenter.org) and worked with KCRW Santa Monica as producer of the 13 hour NPR series *Jewish Short Stories from Eastern Europe and Beyond*. She is a graduate of Amherst College.

### **Diana Lee Morris, OSF U.S. Programs Staff**

Diana Morris is Acting Executive Director of U.S. Programs at the Open Society Foundations and the director of the Open Society Institute-Baltimore, a field office established in 1997 to understand and address the local and state social and economic dynamics at play that impede opportunity and justice.

From 1991-1997, she served as the executive director of the Blaustein Philanthropic Group, a set of eight family foundations based in Baltimore that awards local, national and international grants. Previously, Morris was a program officer at the Ford Foundation, first for refugee and migrant rights (1982-1987) and then for human rights and social justice for Eastern and Southern Africa (1987-1990). Morris began her career as an attorney-adviser for human rights and refugee matters in the Office of the Legal Adviser at the Department of State. She holds an AB from Smith College and a JD from Boston University and is a member of the New York State Bar.

Morris served as president of the Association of Baltimore Area Grantmakers from 1996-2000 and was a member of its board from 1994-2001. She is a member of the board of directors of the Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems and the chair of the board of the Safe and Sound Campaign. She was named to The Daily Record's Top 100 Women in Maryland in 1999 and 2001. Morris is a recipient of a Special Recognition Award from the Maryland Legal Services Corporation and a Public Service Award from Boston University Law School.

### **Aryeh Neier, OSF U.S. Programs Staff**

Before joining the Open Society Institute and the Soros Foundations as President in September 1993, Aryeh Neier spent 12 years as Executive Director of Human Rights Watch, of which he was a

founder in 1978. Prior to that position, he worked for the American Civil Liberties Union for 15 years, including eight as national Executive Director.

Mr. Neier served as an Adjunct Professor of Law at New York University for more than a dozen years (1978-1991) and has lectured at a number of the country's leading universities and at universities in many other countries. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences and the recipient of six honorary doctorates (State University of New York-Binghamton, Hofstra University, Hamilton College, American University, University of Connecticut, and John Jay College of Criminal Justice), the American Bar Association's Gavel Award and the International Bar Association's Rule of Law Award.

The author of six books (*Dossier* (1975), *Crime and Punishment: A Radical Solution* (1976), *Defending My Enemy* (1979), *Only Judgment* (1982), *War Crimes* (1998), and *Taking Liberties* (2003), Mr. Neier has also contributed chapters to more than 35 books.

He has been a frequent contributor to *The New York Review of Books* and has also published in such periodicals as the *New York Times Magazine*, the *New York Times Book Review*, *Foreign Policy*, *Dissent* and a number of law journals. For a dozen years he wrote a column on human rights for *The Nation*. He has contributed more than a 150 op-ed articles to newspapers, including the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *International Herald Tribune*. Many of his articles have been syndicated internationally.

Mr. Neier was born in Nazi Germany and became a refugee at an early age. An internationally recognized expert on human rights, he has conducted investigations of human rights abuses in more than 40 countries around the world. For more than a quarter of a century, he has been directly engaged in efforts to promote compliance with international humanitarian law (the laws of armed conflict) and in the global debate on accountability and bringing to justice those who have committed crimes against humanity. He played a leading role in the establishment of the international tribunal to prosecute those responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity in the former Yugoslavia.

### **Stephen Rickard, OSF U.S. Programs Staff**

Rickard is the director of the Washington office of the Open Society Foundations. Under his direction, the office engages in advocacy on U.S. and international issues, including promotion of human rights and support for open societies abroad. Rickard has a distinguished career as a Washington advocate for human rights.

Before joining the Foundations, Rickard served as the director of the Nuremberg Legacy Project, working to promote U.S. support for international justice. Rickard was also the director of the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights (2000-2001) and the Washington director for Amnesty International USA (1996-2000). Rickard spent many years working for the U.S. government. He was the senior advisor for South Asian Affairs at the State Department where he focused on economic and global issues, including human rights. He also served as senior foreign policy advisor to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

During his time on Capitol Hill, he helped secure Senate approval for numerous treaties on international human rights and labor rights. In the 1980s, Rickard worked as a litigator with the

law firm, White & Case in New York, Washington, and Stockholm. At the firm, he specialized in international arbitration. He helped manage the firm's pro bono legal aid program and served as secretary of the New York City Bar Association's Committee on Legal Assistance.

Rickard received his JD from Yale Law School where he was a member of the Moot Court Board and an editor of the *Yale Journal of International Law*. He holds an MA in public affairs from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School. He graduated summa cum laude from Adrian College with a BA in political science and English.

### **Andrea Soros Colombel, Founder and President, Trace Foundation, and Director, Acumen Fund**

Soros Colombel is the founder and president of Trace Foundation, established in 1993 to promote the cultural continuity and sustainable development of Tibetan communities within China. The foundation implements projects in the fields of education, culture, and rural development. In New York, the foundation has also opened the Latse contemporary Tibetan cultural library. In 2000, Andrea co-founded Tsadra foundation with her husband, Eric Colombel, to support the activities of advanced students of Tibetan Buddhism in the West and preserve rare Tibetan Buddhist resources. She is a director of the Acumen Fund, a non-profit global venture fund uses entrepreneurial approaches to solve the problems of global poverty.

Andrea received her B.A. from University of Chicago in literature and holds a graduate certificate from the Bard Center for Environmental Policy.

### **Andy Stern, OSF U.S. Programs Board, Working Group Co-Chair**

Andy Stern served as president of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) from 1996 to 2010 and is the Ronald O. Perelman Senior Fellow at Columbia University's Richman Center.

Stern is a leading voice and a prominent advocate for people who work. Called a "courageous, visionary leader who charted a bold new course for American unionism," Stern's practical solutions to achieve economic opportunity and justice for all workers have earned the respect of workers, business leaders and policy makers on both sides of the aisle. Under his tenure as president, SEIU bucked the trend and through its signature national and global organizing campaigns Justice for Janitors, There Is No Place Like Home (home care workers), Kids First (child care), grew by more than 1.2 million workers, turning traditionally underpaid service work into jobs that can help support a family and lift up a community.

Stern is a member of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, and through his work to put the American Dream back within the reach of everyday working people, his name is frequently found on the short lists for everything from Washington's most influential leaders on health care to the White House's visitor log to favorite targets of the far right.

Stern began working as a social service worker and member of SEIU Local 668 in 1973. He served as organizing director for SEIU before his landmark election as president in 1996. After launching a national debate about the fundamental change needed to unite the 9 out of 10 American workers who have no organization at work, Stern led SEIU out of the AFL-CIO and

transformed the national labor landscape by founding the Change to Win labor federation with six other major unions in 2005. Stern is the author of the book, *A Country That Works* (Free Press), which offers a fresh prescription for the vital political and economic reforms America needs to get back on track.

### **Bryan Stevenson, OSF U.S. Programs Board**

Stevenson is the Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama, and also a Professor of Law at the New York University School of Law. His representation of poor people and death row prisoners in the deep South has won him national recognition. He and his staff have been successful in overturning dozens of capital murder cases and death sentences where poor people have been unconstitutionally convicted or sentenced.

Mr. Stevenson has been recognized as one of the top public interest lawyers in the country. His efforts to confront bias against the poor and people of color in the criminal justice system have earned him dozens of national awards including the National Public Interest Lawyer of the Year, the ABA Wisdom Award for Public Service, the ACLU National Medal of Liberty, the Reebok Human Rights Award, the Olaf Palme Prize for International Human Rights, and the prestigious MacArthur Foundation Fellowship Award Prize.

He is a graduate of Harvard Law School and the Harvard School of Government. He has published articles on race, poverty and the criminal justice system, and manuals on capital litigation and habeas corpus.

### **Joseph E. Stiglitz, Nobel-prize winning Economist and Professor, Columbia University**

Stiglitz is University Professor at Columbia University in New York and Co-Chair of Columbia University's Committee on Global Thought. He is also the co-founder and Co-President of the Initiative for Policy Dialogue at Columbia.

In 2001, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in economics for his analyses of markets with asymmetric information, and he was a lead author of the 1995 Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. In 2011, *Time* named Stiglitz one of the 100 most influential people in the world. Stiglitz was a member of the Council of Economic Advisers from 1993-95, during the Clinton administration, and served as CEA chairman from 1995-97. He then became Chief Economist and Senior Vice-President of the World Bank from 1997-2000. In 2008 he was asked by the French President Nicolas Sarkozy to chair the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress, which released its final report in September 2009. In 2009 he was appointed by the President of the United Nations General Assembly as chair of the Commission of Experts on Reform of the International Financial and Monetary System, which also released its report in September 2009.

Recognized around the world as a leading economic educator, he has written textbooks that have been translated into more than a dozen languages. He founded one of the leading economics journals, *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*. His book *Globalization and Its Discontents*

(W.W. Norton June 2001) has been translated into 35 languages, besides at least two pirated editions, and in the non-pirated editions has sold more than one million copies worldwide. Other recent books include *The Roaring Nineties* (W.W. Norton); *Towards a New Paradigm in Monetary Economics* (Cambridge University Press) with Bruce Greenwald; *Fair Trade for All* (Oxford University Press), with Andrew Charlton; *Making Globalization Work*, (W.W. Norton and Penguin/ Allen Lane, 2006); and *The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict*, (W.W. Norton and Penguin/ Allen Lane, 2008), with Linda Bilmes of Harvard University. His newest book, *Freefall: America, Free Markets, and the Sinking of the World Economy*, was published in January 2010 by WW Norton and Penguin/ Allen Lane.

A graduate of Amherst College, he received his PHD from MIT in 1967, became a full professor at Yale in 1970, and in 1979 was awarded the John Bates Clark Award, given biennially by the American Economic Association to the economist under 40 who has made the most significant contribution to the field. He has taught at Princeton, Stanford, MIT and was the Drummond Professor and a fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

### **Bill Vandenberg, OSF U.S. Programs Staff**

Bill Vandenberg is the program director for the Democracy Fund at the Open Society Foundations U.S. Programs. The Fund invests in economic and social policy idea generation, voter participation, and grassroots advocacy within diverse constituencies.

Prior to joining OSF, Vandenberg lived in Denver for 17 years, where he was a field strategist on ballot initiative and advocacy campaigns, legislative lobbyist, and the executive director for the Colorado Progressive Coalition, the statewide, multiracial nonprofit that he cofounded in 1996. Spotlighted in the book *White Men Challenging Racism* and honored by Denver's mayor with a "Bill Vandenberg Day," he led the coalition's work to advance racial and economic justice, with highlights including long-time leadership in the state's pro-affirmative action coalition, stewardship of immigrant justice and criminal justice reform organizing, and lobbying successfully to pass anti-racial profiling legislation.

He also led successful campaigns to: raise Colorado's minimum wage in 2006, putting annual wage increases for more than 130,000 low-wage workers into the state's constitution; build community support for a successful referendum fight to roll back the nation's most restrictive and anti-government public investment law; and build the largest non-partisan voter mobilization drive in state history, recognized as one of the nation's top community-based voter programs.

Vandenberg is a graduate of Boston College and was a 2008 fellow in the Rockwood Leadership Program's yearlong national nonprofit leadership program. In addition to directing the Democracy Fund's grantmaking and program development, he has initiated field-based experimentation to catalyze innovation in nonprofit fundraising as well as original research to dissect the roots of white working class conservatism. Vandenberg serves on the board of the General Service Foundation; on the steering committee for the Funders' Committee on Civic Participation; and on the executive committee for the Tax Revenue Campaign.

### **Ethan Zuckerman, OSF U.S. Programs Board**

Zuckerman is director of the Center for Civic Media at MIT, and a principal research scientist at the MIT Media Lab. His research focuses on the distribution of attention in mainstream and new media, the use of technology for international development, and the use of new media technologies by activists.

With Rebecca MacKinnon, Zuckerman co-founded international blogging community Global Voices. Global Voices showcases news and opinions from citizen media in over 150 nations and thirty languages, publishing editions in twenty languages. Through Global Voices and through the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University, where he served as a researcher and fellow for eight years, Zuckerman is active in efforts to promote freedom of expression and fight censorship in online spaces.

In 2000, Zuckerman founded Geekcorps, a technology volunteer corps that sends IT specialists to work on projects in developing nations, with a focus on West Africa. Previously he helped found Tripod.com, one of the web's first "personal publishing" sites. He blogs at <http://ethanzuckerman.com/blog>. He received his bachelor's degree from Williams College, and, as a Fulbright scholar, studied at the University of Ghana at Legon.