

## Facilitation Plan

### The Economy and Democracy: How Are They Related?

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

We talk and worry about the economy all the time. We hear a lot of numbers — about interest rates, job numbers, stock market averages, and budget amounts. We feel it too, whether it's the uplifting feeling when you finally get that job or that raise — or the feeling of dread when you experience hardship. For many of us, we're either wondering about how we'll get by or how we might get ahead — or at least manage not to lose what we have. We live our lives immersed in this system of exchange, and so many of our hopes, dreams, and nightmares are expressed economically. But what does the economy mean for the health of our democracy?

In this conversation, let's explore the relationship between the economy and the health of our democracy. We'll start by exploring concerns and questions about this relationship. Let's explore the possible consequences of rising economic inequality and economic insecurity for our democracy. Let's consider concerns and questions about the interests that shape our economy — and about whom the economy really serves.

#### 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 a concern you have about whether, or how, the economy is working for you and your loved ones.

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

For example, what might be the democratic consequences of rising economic inequality and economic insecurity? If we keep on our current path, where will our democracy end up?

- What concerns do you have, and what questions should we explore, about the relationship between the economy and the health of our democracy?
- What are the existing or emerging challenges for the relationship between our economy (or our economic system) and the health of our democracy?
- What are the consequences of our economic system for our democracy? What if these consequences are by design?
- Whose interests, or what interests, does the economy serve? Whose interests should it serve?

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

- What are some initial ideas for different possibilities to address some of the challenges or concerns we've discussed today — for a more positive relationship between the economy and the health of our democracy?
- As we wrap up, what are some of the key insights or questions that you will take away from this conversation?