BOSS

Building Our Successful Society:
Claiming Our Power, Controlling Our Destiny

Mobile Game Initiative

Charity For People Powered Democracy 501c3
Games for Democracy Project

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The problem:
Voting in under-served communities is LOW

The under-served population in America has real, immediate needs that government can address

Yet many under-served citizens don't engage with government through voting, so politicians can ignore non-voters

Without participation, their problems don't get solved

The solution:
Distribute a free, enjoyable mobile game to MOTIVATE

Create and distribute a mobile game to increase disenfranchised voter turnout

Gameplay is based on overcoming real life situations that keep potential voters on the sidelines

By advancing the game story and game characters' objectives, players recognize that voting improves their lives and those of the communities around them

Why a GAME?

Games allow players to act; explore; experience consequences of actions and inactions; iterate until a problem is solved
   learning by doing is better than learning by listening or watching
   interactive experience is better than passive entertainment experience

Games cause players to feel like winners in a first-person experience:
   "I did this"
   "I see how my actions made the game progress"

The targeted audience owns phones, enjoys playing games & follows popular culture trends

Charity for People Powered Democracy Board

Scott Reilly, President, Project Lead: Scott is a retired General Motors engineering project lead and was also the leader of one of the most active ACLU volunteer People Power groups in the country. Our People Power group helped pass expansion of voting rights in Michigan.

Gamesfordemocracy.org

Charles Thomas, Vice President: Charles is a retired US Post Office station head in the Detroit metro area. He leads a team that works to get out the vote in Detroit by meeting with people face to face. He also heads up a 501c3 that works with a Detroit recreation center to help underserved children and has decades of experience working with the under-served Black community.

gotvmi.org

Kathi Harris, Secretary: Kathi is the executive director of Proactive Projects in Grand Rapids and has decades of experience working for social justice. During the last election she managed hundreds of volunteers to canvas the African American communities in the Grand Rapids metro area.

grproactive.org

Warner Mach, Treasurer: Warner is a social justice warrior that has been working as an activist for decades. He has worked in Scott's ACLU People Power group since its inception in 2017. Warner has a master's degree in Computer Science and a career working in administrative computing for Detroit Public Schools.

Julie Falbaum, At Large Board Member: As an active psychotherapist, Julie brings her professional insight to the work and team dynamics. She also led the passage of Reproductive Freedom For All in 2022. She worked for years with the People Power group to GOTV in Southwest Detroit and Hamtramck.

www.linkedin.com/in/julie-falbaum-68960629/

Game Design and Production

David Warhol – Founder & CEO, Realtime Associates: David has produced over 100 commercial video, computer, and mobile games over the last 40 years. He also produced a strong portfolio of "serious" games that have positive societal impact while remaining engaging and entertaining. The most prominent of these, Re-Mission, was recognized by President Obama for its innovation and effectiveness.

rtassoc.com/projects.html , en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Re-Mission

Steven Meretzky – Senior Game Designer: Steve is an industry-noted and award-winning game designer whose work with Infocom in the 1980's included one of the first titles to be certified "platinum" by the Software Publishers Association. For the last decade, Steve has been working with industry leaders in the mobile game space.

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_Meretzky

Nehemiah "Nemo" Westmoreland – Game Designer & Writer: Nemo is an accomplished game design and writing professional, eventually earning a master's degree from the University of Southern California's prestigious Game Design program.

www.linkedin.com/in/nehemiah-westmoreland/

Academic Contributors

Dr. David Dulio, Political Science Professor, Director Oakland University Center for Civic Engagement: Dr. Dulio has volunteered to create and analyze surveys to be administered before and after focus group members play the prototype game, the analysis from which will be used to shape the production game and document the game's effectiveness.

oakland.edu/polisci/staff/david-dulio

Dr. Jen Mercieca, Communication and Journalism Professor, Texas A&M. Dr. Mercieca studies how democracy is either reinforced or destroyed through societal communications. Specifically, she has been writing and researching the difference between propaganda and persuasion. She joins the team to shape dialog and game play.

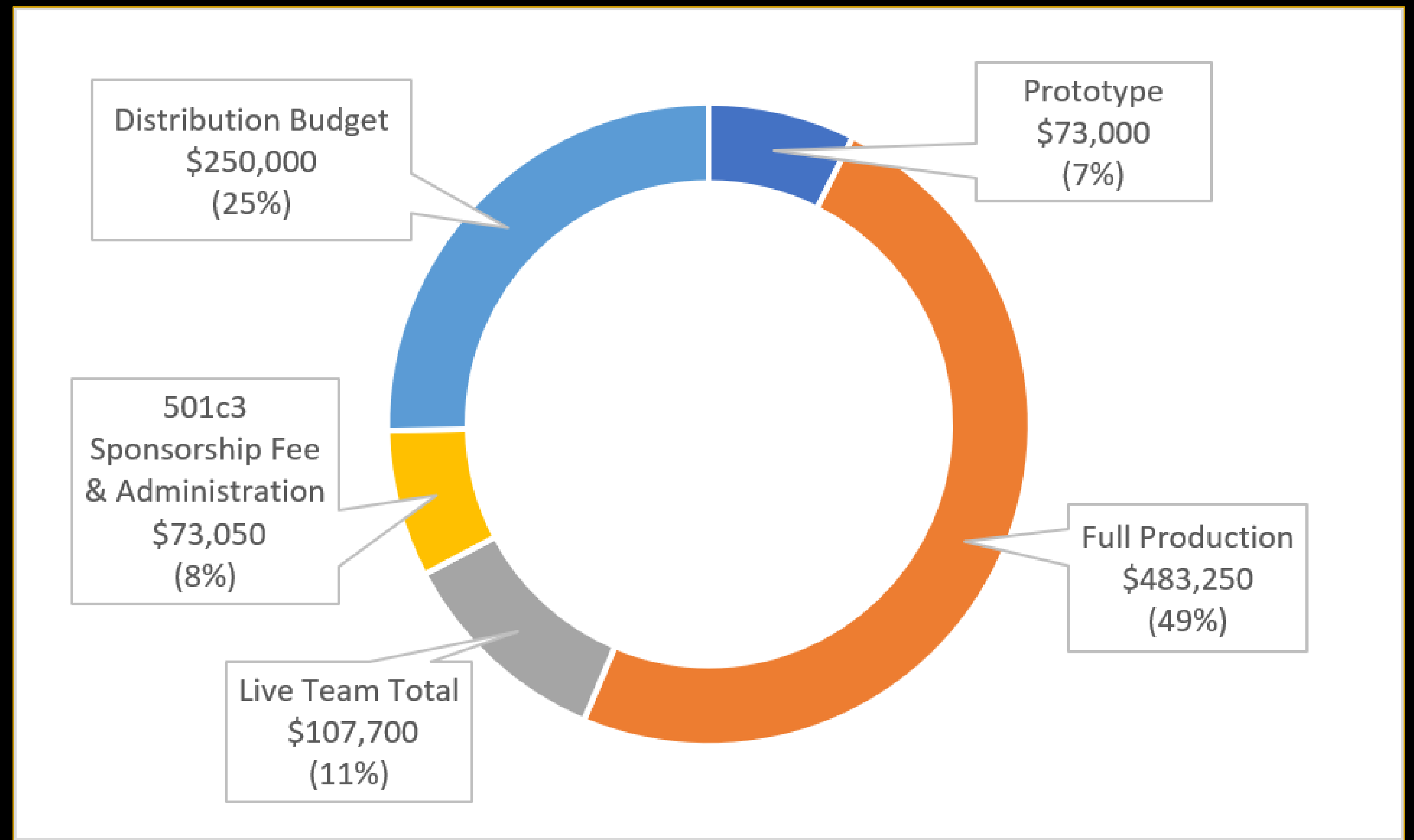en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jennifer_Mercieca

Dr. Peter Hammer - Wayne State University Law Professor , Director of the Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights. Dr. Hammer is connecting us with civil rights organizations and helping us with story lines in the game that relate to civil rights and spatial/structural racism.

law.wayne.edu/profile/ar7084

Project Funding
Prototype: $73,000
Full Raise: $987,000
(Inclusive of Prototype)

Prototype
$73,000
(7%)

Distribution Budget
$250,000
(25%)

501c3
Sponsorship Fee
& Administration
$73,050
(8%)

Full Production
$483,250
(49%)

Live Team Total
$107,700
(11%)

Foundational Research

Title	Organization	Link / Format	Description
Why Many Americans Don't Vote	Five Thirty Eight	https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/non-voters-poll-2020-election/	Covers many of the reasons for and demographics of disenfranchised voters
Voter Turnout	MIT	https://electionlab.mit.edu/research/voter-turnout	Speaks to the measurement of voter turnout and how many people turn out for various elections
Setting the record straight on black voter turnout	Brookings	https://www.brookings.edu/blog/how-we-rise/2019/09/12/setting-the-record-straight-on-black-voter-turnout/	Discussion that Blacks voted at higher rates than other POC and structural issues with the voting process. Contains important contrary views
Poll: Despite Record Turnout, 80 Million Americans Didn't Vote. Here's Why	NPR	https://www.npr.org/2020/12/15/945031391/poll-despite-record-turnout-80-million-americans-didnt-vote-heres-why	Contains several interesting comparisons between voters and nonvoters
Black Americans Have a Clear Vision for Reducing Racism but Little Hope It Will Happen	PEW	https://www.pewresearch.org/race-ethnicity/2022/08/30/black-americans-have-a-clear-vision-for-reducing-racism-but-little-hope-it-will-happen/	Lots of excellent insights into the problem domain. A foundational document to the effort
All elections matter vote and vote local	Carnegie	https://www.carnegie.org/our-work/category/carnegie-reporter/tag/carnegie-reporter-winter-2022/issue/	Discusses the differences in voter turnout for various elections
Young Voters in 2022: Black and Non-College Youth Were Underrepresented	Tufts	https://circle.tufts.edu/latest-research/young-voters-2022-black-and-non-college-youth-were-underrepresented	Addresses differences in voting patterns
Harvard Youth Poll Spring 2022	Harvard	https://iop.harvard.edu/youth-poll/spring-2022-harvard-youth-poll	Accurately predicted a drop in the young black vote in the 2022 election and the reasons why
11 Barriers to Voting	Carnegie	https://www.carnegie.org/our-work/article/11-barriers-voting/	Speaks to structural-process issues with voting
What brought Detroit to the polls?	Bridge Detroit	https://www.bridgedetroit.com/what-brought-detroit-to-the-polls/	Anecdotal quotes from a variety of people and perspectives
Arresting Citizenship	Amy Lerman & Vesla Weaver	Book	Connects the over-policing of the black community with their attitudes toward civic engagement
Poverty By America	Mathew Desmond	Book	Describes the structures in American society that lock people into permanent poverty