



May 15, 2017

**Zeidler Center for Public Discussion, MKE<->LAX & Greater Together  
*Designing Equity* Project Report**

Zeidler Center: [www.zeidlercenter.org/design](http://www.zeidlercenter.org/design)

MKE<->LAX: [www.mke-lax.org](http://www.mke-lax.org)

Greater Together: <http://greatertogether.me>



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## 1. Executive Summary

### Proposal Generation Model

In 2016-2017, the Frank P. Zeidler Center for Public Discussion, MKE<->LAX and Greater Together brought Los Angeles-based internationally recognized public art and experimental new media artist Anne Bray, founder and executive director of [Freewaves](#), to Milwaukee to focus on stimulating public dialogue around race dynamics in Milwaukee through diversifying the creative industries. Anne co-facilitated a residency intensive with a racially diverse group of 12 local artists, designers and advertising creatives November 4-5, 2016. The collaborative group generated three proposals for public art and media projects that were subsequently vetted through Zeidler Center-facilitated input groups in 3 neighborhoods from December

2016-January 2017 and a review with Anne and creative industry leaders on January 13, 2017. Incorporating the feedback, the proposals were combined into one 2017 Project Proposal. An initial public manifestation of the proposal will occur March 12, 2017 with the *Breaking Boxes: An Identity Summit* at the Zeidler Center.



The Zeidler Center, MKE<->LAX and Greater Together have led initiatives to bring awareness to Milwaukee's racial and economic inequality through public media campaigns, public art, creative placemaking, and facilitated public discussions. In Fall 2015, our organizations held focus groups with creative industry professionals with a range of age, gender and race to discuss how to diversify Milwaukee's creative industries, and the focus group feedback was compiled into the "Greater Together Creative Industry Report". This feedback, along with additional

interviews with local talent, revealed a desire for more in-depth discussion and collaborative production of a public art and media project based in our expertise. Milwaukee-based artists, designers, and other creative industry professionals are concerned about the lack of diversity in the talent pool that is accessing industry jobs and independent contracts, as well as the lack of diversity in the cultural representation within popular media distributed in the city and the region. We also want to increase public discussion around race dynamics in Milwaukee overall based in the provocation of the 2014 Greater Together campaign, which

highlighted socio-economic statistics in Wisconsin to reveal some of the largest racial inequities in the U.S.

Our residency intensive with Anne and local creative talent offers an industry model for collaborative and culturally sensitive public art and media production. The intensive built upon the Greater Together Creative Industries Report, while also producing critical work to increase discussion and visibility around racial inequality in Milwaukee, while also advocating that art and design are effective channels to discuss these issues. Partnerships with established advertising and design agencies in the area, such as Hanson Dodge Creative and AIGA Wisconsin, have allowed us to explore the cultural messaging embedded within visual media campaigns, focusing on discussions around developing a racially diverse team during the creative process.

We continue to work with Anne as a visiting artist and cultural facilitator based on her extensive background in producing public art and experimental new media art in a wide range of cultural geographies in Los Angeles and other cities. The subject matter of her projects frequently explore culturally sensitive topics around race, gender, health, and labor to make space for a variety of perspectives to be shared.

## **Intensive Structure**

### **FRIDAY**

6:00-6:30pm: Freeform dinner, project introduction, creative commons license discussion

6:30-7:00pm: Participant introductions: Why did you say yes to this invitation and how do you define your creative work?

7:00-7:30pm: Large group brainstorms potential outcomes

7:30-8:00pm: Pairs brainstorm potential audiences, then large group refines potential audiences and brainstorms values, verbs and outcomes

8:00-8:45pm: Each person prioritizes 2 outcomes, large group review outcomes to identify small groups, small groups meet with 1st outcome choice and option to explore 2nd outcome choice if desired

8:45-9:00pm: Large group sharing around outcomes, discussion of next steps including request to bring reference, laptop, creative tools

### **SATURDAY**

10:00-11:30am: Light breakfast, participant reference sharing, Anne brain food sharing

11:30am-12:30pm: Working lunch, small groups meet with 1st outcome choice

12:30-1:30pm: Small groups meet with option to be in 1st or 2nd outcome choice

1:30-2:45pm: Snacks, large group sharing around outcome exploration

2:45-3:30pm: Freeform light reception refreshments, critics arrive, proposal refinement

3:30-5:00pm: Proposal review for a half hour each with critics, closure discussion

## **Input Groups**

Subsequently to the intensive, Katherine Wilson of the Zeidler Center and a number of the intensive participants facilitated three input groups with 15 community participants each to gather feedback on each of the proposals. The input groups were held at Jazale's Art Studio in Bronzeville, Walker's Point Center for the Arts in Walker's Point and the Zeidler Center in Avenues West neighborhoods. Their specific input can be found in the third section of this report. The specific themes and outcomes that were discussed in the input groups for each proposal include:

1. [Breaking Boxes]: Core reactions to using the word "box" and a framework for discussing identity. Outcome: (Re)humanizing each other; addressing complex racial representation and identity
2. AGENCY Proposal: Discussion of practical implementation and users. Outcome: Demonstrate diversity is profitable and growth equity is possible; Growing a talent agency that connects diverse creatives with industry opportunities
3. "We Am" Proposal: Discussion of "we am" locations and critiques of new terminology. Outcome: Building a New Lexicon; Generating language for cultural representation

## **Proposal Review**

A culminating public proposal review, hosted at Hanson Dodge Creative, gathered over 50 creative industry and other cultural leaders from the City of Milwaukee who provided in-depth feedback on the three final proposals. The session featured large group presentations of each proposal, following with small group input sessions, and then a final report-out of what was gleaned from each input session.

AGENCY was encouraged to research pre-existing models, such as employment agencies and arts non-profits, to help inform its organizational and business structure. The creation of a talent pool along with the investigation of current networks that thrive within the city seemed like initial first-steps to move forward with the project. [Breaking Boxes] was encouraged to focus on the stories of the individuals as rich subject matter, while

supporting further research on other ways to deliver the messaging outside of t-shirts. "We Am" (Lexicon) was encouraged to use sensitivity when critiquing terms such as "diversity" or "racism" as different nuances around cultural representation and context can affect the reading. "**w**orking, **e**quality, **a**rtists, **m**ilwaukee" was suggested as an acronym description to tie "We Am" back to efforts explored around the talent agency. The feedback included ideas for partnerships and resources for the next iteration and led to development of a combined 2017 Project Proposal.

## **2. 2017 Project Proposal**

The following proposal outlines short-term actions that will occur in the next 6-12 months in response to the residency intensive, input groups and proposal review. These actions are the basis of research and development of an agency of creative talent that can advocate for racial equity in the creative industries, partly through providing an active network of creative workers.

### **Network of Creative Talent**

A talent agency comprised of local artists could facilitate hiring and contracting with a culturally diverse set of creatives, while building and reinventing new language around self-identity and cultural representation. The first effort could include a network-based "buddy system," a social support system that explores mentorship and network expansion.

### **Market Analysis of Creative Talent and Opportunities**

A marketplace survey is needed to find creatives of color seeking work and creative directors seeking creative workers. First wave of production could include a study of 25 Milwaukee creatives to map their professional engagements over the course of the next six months. Additional creative industries market analysis could explore existing market rates and contracts for staff and consultants, existing cultural representation of staff, directors, consultants, and industry network leadership, and racial representation in advertising and other media in Milwaukee.

### **Research Agency Models**

Existing models including PEOs (professional employment organizations) and creative industry non-profit organizations may already have successful hiring and retention methods and network production tendencies. An in-depth analysis of different local and national models will further inform the development of the agency with the possibility to amplify or merge with an existing network.

### **Lexicon**

The group has begun to explore new vocabulary that addresses the ineffectiveness around words such as "diversity", "race", and "affirmative action". The term "We Am" was created as a new word to address and encourage moments of cultural mixing. "We Am" can be explored as a graphic or acronym to begin to build public awareness around self-definition and acknowledge businesses and other places that are inviting to a range of racial groups.

### **Breaking Boxes Mobile Station and Workshop**

To play with cultural stereotypes in order to "break the boxes" we find ourselves in, a workshop for defining self-representation through designing media materials can be produced as part of Zeidler Center's programming in collaboration with other local arts and cultural organizations. The initial workshop format occurred with the Zeidler Center's *Breaking Boxes: An Identity Summit* in March 2017, and will be replicated at additional public sites such as the YMCA, cafes, libraries, and schools.

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**Attribution:**  
**Proposals from *Designing Equity***  
November 2016 - January 2017  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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With support from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation.

March 15, 2017

**Theory of Change for *Designing Equity*:  
Diversifying the Creative Industries in the City of Milwaukee to Broaden Cultural Representation**

COC = CREATIVES OF COLOR = Creative workers who identify and who can be identified as from other racial groups than White  
POC = PEOPLE OF COLOR

<b>Proposal Actions</b>	<b>Leadership</b>	<b>Short-Term (6-12 months)</b>	<b>Mid-Term (2-5 years)</b>	<b>Long-Term (10-20 years)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network of Creative Talent</li> <li>• Market Analysis of Creative Talent and Opportunities</li> <li>• Research Agency Models</li> <li>• Lexicon</li> <li>• Breaking Boxes Mobile Station and Workshop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zeidler Center</li> <li>• MKE&lt;-&gt;LAX</li> <li>• Greater Together</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 mentorship pairings of COCs with creative industries consultants and staff with documentation of network production</li> <li>• 1 survey of COCs and creative industries directors to identify talent and opportunities</li> <li>• 1 agency model report in collaboration with existing creative industries networks</li> <li>• 1 business plan for production of agency with initial resources identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 agency formalized as marketplace hub and profitable for 2 years with public annual report for 25% of COCs and 25% of creative industries directors</li> <li>• agency symbol present digitally and/or physically at 200 businesses</li> <li>• 50% of COCs and creative industries directors participate in survey to document <i>Designing Equity</i> participation</li> <li>• 30% of creative industries directors aware of agency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 1 agency as marketplace hub profitable for 5 years with public annual report for 50% of independent and staff COCs in creative industry</li> <li>• 60% of creative industries directors aware of agency</li> <li>• 40% of creative industries directors with agency symbol present digitally and/or physically in connection to businesses</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 market analysis report of cultural representation of creative industries full-time staff, directors, network organizations leadership and consultants</li> <li>• 1 market analysis of racial representation in advertising and other media made in and publicly shared in Milwaukee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20% of full-time staff positions in the creative industries are COCs</li> <li>• 15% of director positions in the creative industries are COCs</li> <li>• 20% of leadership roles in the creative industries network organizations are COCs</li> <li>• 20% of consultants in the creative industries are COCs</li> <li>• 20% of advertising and other media made in and publicly shared in Milwaukee includes mixed racial representation with at least 50% POCs or racial representation other than White</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% of full-time staff positions in the creative industries are COCs</li> <li>• 30% of director positions in the creative industries are COCs</li> <li>• 50% of leadership roles in the creative industries network organizations are COCs</li> <li>• 50% of consultants in the creative industries are COCs</li> <li>• 50% of advertising and other media made in and publicly shared in Milwaukee includes mixed racial representation with at least 50% POCs or racial representation other than White</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 market analysis report of market rates and contracts for creative industries consultants and staff</li> <li>• 1 proposal for agency standard contract with market rate recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20% of COCs paid at market rate with agency standard contracts</li> <li>• 20% of creative industries directors and 20% of COCs not in standard contracts are aware of market rate and standard contracts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% of COCs paid at market rate with agency standard contracts</li> <li>• 50% of creative industries directors and 50% of COCs not in agency standard contracts are aware of market and standard contracts</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 <i>Designing Equity</i> intensive toolkit</li> <li>• 1 creative industries director uses toolkit during project concepting with documentation of process</li> <li>• 1 market analysis report of creative industries directors preferred project concepting approaches in relationship to cultural representation of creative industries consultants and staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 250 copies of <i>Designing Equity</i> intensive toolkit distributed to COCs and creative industries directors</li> <li>• 5 creative industries directors use method during project concepting with documentation of process each year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Designing Equity</i> intensive toolkit used by creative industries directors during 10% of project concepting</li> <li>• 50% of creative industries directors aware of toolkit</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 lexicon generated with 3-10 terms which are combination of existing and new terms</li><li>• 1 press release and online sharing of lexicon via project leadership networks</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 25% of COCs and 25% of creative industries directors aware of lexicon and/or using terms within it</li><li>• 1 or more lexicon term present in 5% of advertising and other media made in and publicly shared in Milwaukee</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 50% of COCs and 50% of creative industries directors aware of lexicon and/or using terms within it</li><li>• 1 or more lexicon term present in 10% of advertising and other media made in and publicly shared in Milwaukee</li></ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 <i>Breaking Boxes</i> sessions offered at a geographic range of public and private settings and COCs identified encouraged to connect with agency</li> <li>• 40% of <i>Breaking Boxes</i> participants acknowledge a change in their sense of identity</li> <li>• 10,000 digital and/or physical uses of <i>Breaking Boxes</i> materials or references in commercial and non-commercial points of contact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zeidler Center has <i>Breaking Boxes</i> as core facilitation service for at least 3 years and offers 25 sessions each year</li> <li>• Other organizations and businesses offer an additional 25 sessions each year for at least 3 years</li> <li>• All sessions at a geographic range of public and private settings and COCs identified encouraged to connect with agency</li> <li>• 40% of <i>Breaking Boxes</i> participants acknowledge a change in their sense of identity</li> <li>• Assessment within 5 years to determine if sessions will continue as part of Zeidler Center and agency services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• n/a</li> </ul>
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## **Intensive Content**

This content was brainstormed during the intensive as potential guides during the concepting of the proposals.

### *Verbs*

- Negotiate
- Provoke
- Demand
- Entertain
- Move
- Inform
- Ask
- Show
- Shock
- Surprise
- Seduce
- Joke
- Judge
- Scold
- Enrage
- Complement
- Honor
- Cajole
- Embarrass
- Reject
- Pretend
- Snub
- Encourage
- Love
- Hate
- Welcome
- Amaze
- Accuse
- Involve
- Incentivize
- Humanize
- Seduce
- Romance
- Enfranchise
- Compel

### *Values*

- Equity
- Integrity
- Fairness
- Justice
- Transparency
- Trust
- Respect
- Collectivity
- Abundance
- Individuality

- Complexity
- Self-worth
- Amplification

#### *Audiences*

- Suburban residents
- Homogenous groups
- Suburban-urban resident connections
- Self-identified "good" people
- Privileged people who think the world is fair
- Unknowing racists
- People with the least amount of power (disenfranchised)
- Rich people
- Elders
- Young people
- Trump supporters
- Rich-poor people connections
- University heads
- Politicians
- Self-identified economic status people
- Activists/advocates
- Representatives of this discussion
- System travelers
- Broken system believers
- Non-voters
- Anti-voters

#### *Outcomes*

- Diversify design community
- Dismantle white dominance
- Establish economic equality + growth
- Create job, education, home, and family opportunities for POC
- Question white privilege
- Integrate neighborhoods
- See differences not as inferiority and superiority, or alienation
- Respect my culture, identity, self, and history
- Communicate easily with others
- Define diversity
- Build lexicon (vocabulary set)
- Acknowledge systemic and systematic racism exists
- Model healthy and abundant behaviors, systems, and practices

## **Input Group Feedback**

### **[Breaking Boxes] Proposal**

December 6, 2016

Outcome: (Re)humanizing each other: complex racial representation and identity

Initial Participants: Shane, Los, Brad, Debbie, Adam



- Clarify questions asked of participant
  - What boxes would someone put you in by looking at you?
  - How do you “break” that box?
  - How are you not that box?
- Refine template for t-shirt and gif design and production related to social exchange
- Expert facilitators and media-makers ideally needed for this labor-intensive process
- Intensive participants could be initial set for template, though different ages, classes, sectors, races, etc could be helpful
- Kiosk needs careful craft to express design matters, potentially table this until after proposal review unless a quick mock-up is possible

### *Input Group Notes*

What boxes would someone put you in by looking at you?

- My boxes are: African-American, young, threatening or non-threatening depending on the circumstances, male.
- My boxes are: white, female, artist, friend, hipster.
- For me, it depends: angry black man, peaceful giant, empath.
- I feel that my boxes are: adjunct professor, brainy, scruffy.
- Tee shirt that was chosen by speaker Artist/Survivor/deconstructor. I define my identity by my action. Putting people in boxes is how we all associate. People didn't feel safe approaching me without first putting me in a box to make them feel comfortable. My box is female first. My social world is a broken box network of stereotype breakers. I do not use social media online in any way. My secret heritage is Jewish but I grew up in Black neighborhoods so I was deeply affected by the diaspora of each. No one ever recognizes me as a Jew even if they know that I am. My white privilege is a power that breaks boxes. My identity is rooted in a global relationship to people and the Diaspora of African and Jewish cultures and totally frames my sense of self.

- People default to put me in the African American box then surprise I speak Japanese. Then surprise again I speak different dialects of Japanese. I am half White and Half Black and that makes me a whole new thing. I am a check box warrior. I travel and fit into different groups. I am not one thing I am so many things. When I was at university white people would say " you look like your name is Jamaal" and Blk people would say I look like "Chuck or Skip". I've always led by example because I know people are watching. Started going to a Blk school they called me white, I went to a Wt school they called me Black. I went to an integrated school and I just mingles with everyone. The context kinda of defined me for the people around me.
- Race is the easiest category to box people in. In America, I am just Asian but I am Chinese and Taiwanese by culture. I am not typically Asian. I do not fall into those stereotypes. I look much younger than I am so in professional settings I usually wear a sportcoat or something professional. I am very conscious of age and looks. My presentation has to be better so I am seen at the same level as other people. I have to be a part of the group and respected. Clothes are my camouflage. My identity is what I am doing and what I am passionate about. I need to look the right way to be accepted in the professional field. People ask why I don't relax but I do sometimes just not at meetings. For me, it is about typical vs not typical. I have dual citizenship and I travel, I am curious I want to know what is in the world.
- My main stereotype is being Blk Male and the things that go with that. That is not all I am.
- Being educated and having suburban schooling and that is like the other end of the spectrum. They act like I am a Cosby kid even though I am from a poor neighborhood. Where I grew up almost no one goes to college. I studied engineering but I didn't finish. I went to junior college then transferred to a major university. I build things like art, reconstruct furniture build motor trikes but it is something anyone can do. I don't have a bunch of expensive stuff I just go to harbor and freight. I do work in my garage because I don't have a giant workshop. I leave the door open and I see people walking by and I can tell they want to talk and sometimes we do. If people ask me a question I take the time to tell them what I am doing and that they can do it too. I don't have a special talent I just taught myself how to do most things.
- People put me in many boxes. Can't figure me out from looking at me.
- Not my age.
- Male, black, aggressive, artist, weirdo
- Non-threatening, asked for advice, nice person
- Black, ignorant, simple, mixed, old, grey, short, obese

How do you "break" that box?

- My boxes change because I change. For example, when I am with my fiancée [the participant is black and his fiancée is white] everything changes. I feel that the people that surround me break my box. I don't personally break the box. It seems as if the perception of me changed. Ultimately, I perceive people differently based on how people perceive me.
- As for my boxes, in relation to the 'white' box, I happen to be jewish. Learning about the history of my family in Europe helps me break the box. As of the 'female' box, thinking that gender is a spectrum helps me. In relation to being an 'artist,' I don't know what the word 'artist' means. I perceive the expectations about outcomes that the people around me associate with an 'artists.' For 'friend,' I believe I am, but I am becoming more cautious the older I get. And for 'hipster,' I am a poor working girl. My clothes are donated.
- I break out of the box by showing examples of who I am and what I do. Its the way I dress, the way I walk and the way I talk show who I really am not the idea of me. I

may go to the ballet because I enjoy the ballet. If they give samples of wine and cheese I pass because I don't know what those particular kinds are and I don't drink. I am true to what I like and who I am. I am often the designated driver when I go out but I like to go out and be with friends and party. I usually end up being the DD. I want things better. I lead by example and I don't have to step outside of myself.

- There is no box. My mother taught my brother and I from common sense. I still remember how I was taken out of school to see the broadcast of the Watergate. My mother pointed at those men and exclaimed, 'they are lying'; years later, they were writing books or hosting radio shows. That was the point when I lost trust in the government. I am not mad; I speak my mind clearly about politics, religion, sexuality...

In my opinion, there is no box because I have been taught to be universal, which helps me be not judgmental.

- I travel in multiple circles. I feel that it is unsafe in my scientific circles to say that I am an Evangelical Christian. I break my box of being brainy and scruffy when people find out that I am a community activist.
- One box that I have not mentioned is being Chinese. When I am in China, people realize very quickly that I am not Chinese. Here in my community people expect me to be Chinese, although I have been born in Massachusetts. However, at the same time, when I am either in the east or west coast, other Chinese think that I am only 'kind of' Chinese.
- These tee shirts are like an entryway into the real stories of people.

What t-shirt(s) would you design based on the small groups responses

- "The only black kid at the 'white' school." I was part of Chapter 220. As a child I had identity problems. I thought that I was white as the other kids until I tried to copy another child in my school and pull my hair back the same way he did. Sometimes I feel disconnected from my culture [the participant was referring to the culture of this family, predominantly black.]
- I don't like that people, including in my family, judge me when I code-switch depending of who I am with, if my fiancée is with me or not.
- Check age box: none of your business; ageless
- 31\* see resume\*
- Not an intern
- What box would be most comfortable for you to put me in?
- Proud female
- I am a descendant of slaves
- "[Missing] by nature. Mixed race in Asia."  
God means to me wisdom, power, and force. My jihadis against myself, and it is a big enough jihad. I perceive that people put each of us in a box, and I refuse that.
- "Manic Pixie Dream Girl."  
People see me as a female character that shows the beauty of life to a male character without having goals or feelings of my own.
- "Not a Tiger Mother" Or "Listen to Your Mother."
- I spent a little time reflecting on which taglines worked best, particularly evaluating how they would read as a t-shirt. That type of slogan t-shirt is popular right now — [check out some examples from Nike](#). In that set of images, most of them are forceful declarations. They are affirmative statements made by the wearer about who they chose to be. To pull in some of the parlance we've developed, it's about expressing agency, and in the retail experience (i.e. the people that buy these), it's about choosing a particular sense of agency you identify with. Another twist on our jargon — I think we're giving people an opportunity to "IAM-ify," especially those who are usually trapped by the "YOUARE-ifying" of mainstreamed cultural forces. For that

reason, the slogans that felt particularly effective were the ones where the speaker or wearer is saying, "this is who I choose to be" as opposed to the slogans that were more about clever commentary. For example, I don't think my "I used to be Asian" slogan worked all that well, because while I'm making a worthwhile commentary about my identity, it's more about how I'm categorized by others rather than how I choose to categorize (or not categorize) myself. Whereas, I thought the "Fafsa Black" slogan was particularly intriguing, because it pointed to a subversive gesture on the part of the wearer. In other words, it's about how we take control and break boxes ourselves, not about how boxes break on us. I think that might be a good germinal seed to build questions for our public participation process.

General Feedback (from Empathy Map exercise):

- Keep design element consistent
- How does someone submit to website?
- Process needs parameters to make it function
- Making own shirts is better.
- Website could sign people up for workshop
- Best part of this idea is the opportunity to share stories
- I wouldn't by the t-shirt – t-shirts are overdone
- I've already sold one of my t-shirts
- Use social to engage in shirt designs
- How do you not preach to the choir?
- Needs some kind of personal interaction
- Words that end a conversation shouldn't be on a shirt
- Drag/drop online to make a t-shirt?
- What's the lifespan of this project?
- The project could include a workshop – but how to schedule and who to invite?

## AGENCY Proposal

December 14, 2016

Outcome: Demonstrate diversity is profitable and growth equity is possible: growing a talent agency that connects diverse creatives with industry opportunities

Initial Participants: Monica, Mikal, Vedale, Tim



- Build marketing collateral for an initial fake agency to assess industry interest
- Consider making online questionnaires for talent and company heads looking to hire or contract
- Intensive participants and Ken Hanson could complete questionnaires for initial set of responses
- Building a talent agency business is a big project that could be an important long-term initiative with a Professional Employment Organization as a potential form (PEO)
- (PEO)ple as potential business name

### *Input Group Notes*

1. What markets could be expanded to if the creative industries understood them better?

- Sports, other media streams
- Film/video/architecture, citizen journals
- Creative consortiums and s-corps
- Communities to be marketed to: new Americans, recent immigrants, youth (older people are coming up with the ideas)
- Relatability can expand markets
- Authenticity (how do we attract millennials and people of color?)
  - Create a marketing team that accurately reflects who you want to market to
- Creative industries need to contribute and learn. For example, "most HR employees are young 20-something white women". Educate individuals in those positions on cultural nuances.
- Real estate, places that sell products for people of color's hair.
- Educational material like books or products sold in the learning industries.
- Young artists or musicians who don't have a college degree, have a strong social media presence, and are not in big galleries.
- Individuals without a traditional background.
- Individuals who are brilliant but unidentified through the normal scans, who could benefit from an organization with their critical thinking in a variety of aspects.

- All companies can benefit from this agency. I am thinking about the open-minded approach that McDonald's has taken in their campaigns on BET, how culturally-aware they have been.
- The global market.
- I feel that urban community language is different than the language used by the Caucasian population. How things are presented matters.

## 2. How would you like to contribute to diversifying the creative industries?

- Education, cultural awareness through mock interviews with (youth of color) to prepare for the industry
- White people in positions of power need to change & educate themselves on cultural nuances
- Employers should seek outside of conventional methods
  - Self-taught (artists, workers)
  - Go to grassroots organizations and community groups instead of job fairs that are already limiting access from individuals who need work
- Create events that "force" interactions with other groups and individuals
- How do we create a lexicon that is forward thinking and that helps bridge understanding between individuals/groups
- Hiring people of color, women. Have those individuals then be the representatives that can bridge gaps from the employer to the potentially employed.
  - (Show proof that diversity works)
- Point out that diversity exists
  - Even in homogenous groups of white male CEOs, have them explore what makes them "diverse" individuals, they may find things that you can't see visually but are a part of someone's background
- Partnering and training, such as pipeline experiences like at Bradley Tech, could be beneficial
- Show that diverse hires, with the proper training and investment, keeps employees and saves money that results in high recruitment turnover.
- Identifying young people's talents and placing them in positions that are useful.
- Helping other artists. I can educate artists on the business side of art.
- Help artists present themselves in the light of companies.
- Support young people to do art and provide them with resources.
- Channel young people to their strengths.
- Influence education so art is included in schools.
- Provide my gifts.
- Introduce people with untapped talent to people that have already walked their way.
- Provide feedback about hiring ads before they are published.
- Teaching how to survey talent.
- Help non-profits/churches/communities develop talent.
- Transform libraries so our kids have space for creativity.
- Reporting to media/social media good things that black people do.

## General Feedback (from Empathy Map exercise):

- Hate/strongly dislike the logo, the arrows are confusing. Perhaps they can expand out to express forward thinking/accepting
- Who do mean when you say "person of color"? Could we expand our language to include what the age, race, gender?
  - Diversity.... young black men
  - Diversity.... Latina
- Should this be a non-profit? B-corp?

- Resume can show experience over education
- Include a non-traditional internship experience opportunity
- Use word “undertapped”
- Put testimonials on web
- Actively engage in social
- In Milwaukee, if you are a person of color, even if you have the job (through recruitment), where can you go with your friends where you aren’t racially profiled?
- Even though you are placed at work and aren’t being profiled/treated differently, feeling like a minority there may not have happened at that site, but it’s happened in the world.
  - o And if it does happen, who do you tell it to? Your white, male, boss? (ie: if you are a woman who is being harassed, possibly by your boss? Who do you tell then?)

## "We Am" Proposal

January 3, 2017

Outcome: Building a New Lexicon: generating language for cultural representation

Initial Participants: Katie, Elmer, Tim, Fernando



- Explore making a new word with graphic
- Explore "i" as body and "i"- "we" merge if continue with "We Am" term
- Consider making videos of "We Am" moments with intensive participants as potential initial set
- Consider stencil or vinyl for initial public space placement like sidewalk or side of building that could become opportunity for selfies
- Ebonics critique is a significant concern (how to mitigate?)
- Identify range of cost-effective media options
- Use animation to connect multiple words together
- Explore words with other prefixes and combinations: mult-i-am, uni-we, trans-us (Is it useful to have a new term or does We am work?)
- Write definitions for existing words that are needed in common form or are easily misused: diversity, cultural representation, race, structural racism, equity, white privilege
- Resolve how to distribute: are there places already in the city where "We Am" moments exists (where cultural groups mix already) or could exist?
  - Pleasant Cafe, Whole Foods, Bradford Beach, The Tandem
  - Offer "certification mark" for a business to show in window
- Consider a "Rickrolling" internet meme game where you get people to look at a "We Am" video

### *Input Group Notes*

1. What words do you think need to be defined or redefined for this new lexicon? What words are you sensitive about (for whatever reason)?

Alternative words suggested to consider:

- Cultopia
- Pantopia
- Levity
- Umbuntu (existing)
- Uni-be
- Cosmic Vortexes of Love

- Pan-Am
- Pan-Milwaukee
- Omi-Am
- Yes-Si-Oui-Shi
- Solidarity. -- Solidify
- Wisconnect
- Mil-I-Am
- multi-am
- uni-we
- trans-us
- Lexicon/phrases can trigger issues. Someone will always be offended. To the point that it was suggested that "weam" relates to ebonics: it does not make me think of ebonics, and in fact, it makes me offended that it was suggested.
- Redefining is hard to do. We should start with the root of the problem first.
- Diversity & inclusion are words I think of that aren't helpful with our current lexicon. The words are hardly used correctly. We should also be sensitive to language that is used to create barriers from others. In addition to this, we need to stop making assessments about what your assumptions are about where someone currently is in life. It limits their potential about where they want to be.
- Also felt that diversity and & inclusion, along with affirmative action, weren't being used correctly.
- We must remember that diversity is socioeconomic.
- Literate - define literate
- Racism
- Discrimination
- Privilege
- Need discussion of capitalistic system -- understand how that can breed different mentalities
- Militancy
- Rights
- Riot
- Violence
- How we define certain events that happen in communities
- Make it plain -- don't use empty code words (urban for black)
- Keep it simple
- Make it have a foundation and yet it should be simple to understand for anyone
- Don't just use a black face to represent all of us
- Within one race there's so many cultures
- Diversity - gets thrown about and it sounds good
- Need to define these key terms because people have so many definitions
- What terms are placed on what people?
- Terrorism (domestic)
- Easily recognized
- Segregation/Integration
- Integration (means a bunch of black people are going to come live next to you)
- Racism
- Does someone's idea of you impact your life? That's racism. Don't put us in the bad school.
- Charity
- Use short phrases and definitions As the lead
- We are not a melting pot we are a tossed salad. (Visually represent a tossed salad or a stew)
- The Salad Effect

- Suburbs and inner city, downtown, uptown... because we get separated by those words.
- Privilege because I have 'man privilege'.
- Empathy: People should look up definition.
- Cultural fit, equality, racism, unity, love, diverse, and privilege.
- I feel that these words are sensitive to me because I got told that I was passively against transsexuals.
- Other words are boy, matters, nigger, and black, although this last one depends on the context and who says it.
- Diversity, unity. Unity needs to be looked up because some of our ideas or events are not including everyone.
- I feel sensitive to ghetto and minority, the last one because it seems to categorize people as a special class and can be understood as a coded word.
- Us, solidarity, equal, inclusive. We need to restructure these words. Depending on the person, you get different meanings because our brains fill in the gaps using personal filters and personal past experiences.
- Racism, prejudice, privilege. Racism is used as something that we throw at each other. I also think that we should consider the difference between racism and prejudice. Another word that I am sensitive about is allies because of the cultural appropriation.
- Diversity and equality because they are used at UWM in a way that I disagree with.
- African-american and Ebonics because people associate a negative connotation, and there is not.
- Female and intersectionality.

2. What are places in Milwaukee where you experience "We Am" (cultural groups mixing) moments?

- Spaces like this (the Zeidler Center / Input Group) give opportunities to be authentic.
- Public Allies and Corporate Diversity trainings also have this quality.
- Doesn't feel as though it happens naturally, individuals need to be forced into situations where you have to interact with people you don't normally talk to.
- The individuals in this room don't represent a diverse group. We may look different, but that is the extent of it. I also often have to ask to be invited to groups like this, I'm normally not in the loop. I never usually feel that I am in a "weam" space.
- Jazale's Art Studio is a weam space. I wonder who are the individuals who seek out the weam spaces.
- East side Milwaukee (Brady/Locust/Farwell area with all the restaurants)
- Walkers Point
- Jazale's Art Studio (Bronzeville)
- East side
- Riverwest
- Spaces centered around specific events
- Bars that shift their themes and the crowds completely change and mix
- People's houses -- individuals carry a diverse sphere of friends
- Clarke Square
- Grocery Store
- Menomonee Falls Walmart
- Folk Fair
- Riverside was multicultural but isn't anymore
- Milwaukee School of Languages
- Burbank Elementary
- East side in the most mixed area
- There's not a lot of places where people feel comfortable and it's diverse

- Victor's
- Beauty shops
- Soul food place
- Places of sharing
- It's changed - white people telling us that we don't know who these zombies are
- Brady street has changed
- Third ward has changed
- Body and Soul Healing Arts Center
- Riverwest Yoga Shala
- HighHat if you get there before 9p
- Citynet cafe
- Carolines Jazz Estate
- Maharaja
- Bollywood
- Coffee Makes You Black
- Diverse church
- Mad Planet
- Quarters
- UWM's Student Union, Jazz Gallery in Riverwest, and Red Arrow Park because people show up for events and rallies. Other places are movie theaters.
- I cannot think of places different than when I meet with friends and families. I don't think that there is a specific We-Am place.
- I feel that I am the one that can make those moments. For me, there is no specific place. When I was in Colorado, however, I thought the bus was like Noah's Ark, there were people of all sorts and colors. I felt that was a we-am moment. At the same time, I feel I am self-contained.
- Red Arrow.
- Something related to the arts and music like SummerFest.
- Coffee Makes You Black.
- Sometimes I feel that Riverwest is a we-am place.
- In general, I feel that it is the experience, more than the physical place.
- Amaranth Bakery, I consider this place what I call a cosmic vortex of love because there are people from all over the place.
- Coffee Makes You Black. Europeans that I have taken there feel comfortable, like if they were home
- A new restaurant called Tandem.
- Fuel Cafe.
- Bus stops. On bus stops, I start conversations by saying 'how is your day going?' It works as a charm; people begin pouring themselves out.
- Amaranth and Pleasant.
- Coffee Makes You Black.

**3. Where could this lexicon be placed, accessed or experienced?**

- "Weam" could be placed locally. It could go all over Milwaukee and be introduced as a brand to build familiarity. For example, what if you created bumper stickers and were able to get Uber Drivers to put them on the backs of their cars?
- A digital component is necessary. How do you create viral movement? (not art example found publicly in Boston, MA)
- Perhaps the word could go on the coffee sleeves of local coffee shops around the city, such as Coffee Makes You Black, Fuel, and Pleasant Kafe?
- You could place the word on longboards, bike paths
- Create a commercial campaign that airs during the Superbowl.
- Wearables?

- All Peoples and Redeemer churches
- Billboards
- Posters with a word and definition
- Having people throw events around words
- Release parties for words where the word is redefined
- LGBT friendly places have the flags
- Neighborhoods have flags
- Have a kind of flag -- "chill zone"
- Board or group of people need to define, work for it.
- Should be on Northside, places less diverse. Shorewood. Whitefish Bay. Non-confrontational definitions.
- Have some financial or business incentives -- swipe card, incentives for shopkeeper to have the lexicon.
- Have some kind of association behind it -- grant money that's going somewhere.
- Businesses that work with the lexicon have some monetary benefit
- Local currency
- Social media, county parks, bus stops, billboards, family places, schools, corporate (Collectivos, Pick 'n Save), golf course (and other places that we assume do not match our target group).
- Social media, schools, little billboards in different places and formats to make people curious, to make them wonder what this new lexicon is all about.
- Pick 'n Save (the one on 124th and Capitol), college freshman orientation, bus stops, social media, give out free coupons to restaurants so people can mix together.
- I am a strong believer of connection stories and associations. I also believe in giving out stuff that people can stamp, touch... like bookmarks... something that will stand out.
- Children's charity events.
- Places connected to food (supermarkets).
- Find champions in Milwaukee that can use these words and teach them to organizations and individuals; the words need to be said.
- Buttons, t-shirts...
- Social media, billboards, graphics strategically placed at buildings.

General Feedback (from Empathy Map exercise):

- Weam is good, it makes you reflect on the singular form "I" that re-emphasizes the plural form "we"
- Weam might be too abstract for the general public
- It could create opportunities for participation in spaces that encompasses the "weam" concept
- There are layers behind the clever wordsmithing - we still have the same problems.
- Needs some visual
- Needs to have that connection sorry
- Emotion
- Next step
- Commercial -- something obvious that you can't get away from
- Action steps
- Social media
- Hashtags have made us lazy
- Committed to long term process
- Some type of sign to acknowledge weam spaces
- Seeing the thing a lot of times
- We amity
- Buying local

- Within social media -- what would happen to your money if you spent it in this area
- Sharing real information
- Word parties
- Facebook live
- What's in it for me
- Needs to be built by everyone and that people can take part in it
- Organic experience where we all are building it together
- Word play and identify spaces and the action steps by offering suggestions
- Create a Passport
- Gamify it
- I weam by going to someplace in Bayview I'd never go
- Where are these tiny things that will have an exponential effect
- Place to harvest ideas
- One thing that you can do
- People connecting who have alignment with one another, coming out of isolation.
- Finding commonality amongst people.
- Monopoly pieces -- giving something physical

## Proposal Review Feedback

January 13, 2017



### [Breaking Boxes]

- Do labels exist? Are labels more negative than positive?
  - Do we want to be labeled? How can you identify a box if you don't believe in labels?
  - Most don't notice boxes until they are labeled. Self-Identify vs Identifying others
- Are you allowed to self-identify outside of perception? are we using adjectives or constraints?
  - Students, schools, possible places to find case studies
  - Conversation -> Leads to discovery of shirts
  - Workshops -> interactivity, educational & conversational
- Authentic influencers? Who are they, how do you get them? (ex. Rebels t-shirt; urban underground; neighborhoods?)
  - Faith based centers for case studies/facilitators?
  - Issues with "re-humanize" language.
  - Focus on a message -> this generates the t-shirts
  - Back of t-shirts -> Ask Me? Create conversation
- Are children too young for this conversation? Are we creating boxes for them?
  - Perception of t-shirts; if that's the only message people see will it insure positive outcomes? Or are negative responses a positive?
  - Creative outlet, important conversations
- How do we clarify our message?
  - Possible merchandising options
  - Narrow down a target market
- Who is doing this activity or facilitating the project?
  - Facilitate neighborhoods, groups, etc to create their shirt
  - Pairing discussions + facilitators -> this creates authentic conversations

### AGENCY

- Concept is brilliant
- Equity is addressed, this is a start for beginning to eliminate gaps
- Will help broaden skills of those looking for mentorship and who need work
- Great opportunity to explore this project now with the incoming businesses
- Concern that artists should be open to others who have the appropriate skillset
- It may be a challenge to find the talent and improve skills

- How do people find AGENCY? What alignment happens with individuals who are in the industry?
  - It's important to get individuals in high-impact positions that will actually begin to affect diversity
- AGENCY understands that diverse perspectives can increase profit
- How can you marry efficiency with affordability?
  - Make the case that you are the path of least resistance (example: Roundy's and Aurora are local businesses that function on a large enough scale to need creative input in some way.)
- What might be an initial scale of action?
  - Survey the landscape; see if there are existing models that may be doing this well
- Are you placing creatives in "day jobs"? Or are you placing them in positions with their creative skillset? How do you "cross-pollinate" skills?
- What are you selling? What is your target market/audience?
  - You may need to narrow your focus to sustain the business
- Is this a place? Or a database? What is the expected overhead?
- A sizable volume of talent is needed to make this work, and you need places for this talent to go
- The GMF has a business resource database that could be helpful
- How can we get individuals to take steps outside of their networks?
- A website can help this
- What can help you expand your network?
- How do you prevent a clique?
- How do you see talent vs. a professional?
- Pipeline or pre-existing talent?
- AGENCY should focus on one or the other
- You may have more immediate impact on those who have talent
- The Greater Milwaukee Committee could be a collaborator
- Identify the phases of implementation and goals; create a roadmap and focus on robust sustainability
- Big Step could be a good model
- Employ MKE
- WWBIC
- Connect with high schools and create a pipeline
- Can you convince pre-existing infrastructure
- MKE Film Festival
- Personal, and word of mouth, connections are the strongest connection
- Build bridges between the silos/networks
- The infinity / circulation suggests constant momentum
- It suggests an "in and out" which conceptually doesn't read well. Perhaps arrows can point up to suggest diversity is built upward

### **"We Am" (Lexicon)**

- A library LOUD day - a day to get people to talk to one another
- How to be a "We Am" place:
  - Staff training
  - Suggestion box
  - Conversation starters
- Staff t-shirts as prompts
- Wemeets workshops
- A new definition for diversity: an HR goal
- Dialogue Maker

- WEAM diversity (to be, we are)
- Uni-we
- Words to be re-defined: safe, safety
- Juice Kitchen
- Jake's
- Downtown Y
- Where do these projects go?
- What does "We Am" replace?
- It replaces old language with new language
- How do you get people to talk to each other at places that are "diverse"?
- The "We Am" graphic looked like a slave ship, perhaps a flag shape could be better
- + (plus sign) i (upside down exclamation point): these could represent interconnection, people
- ! (exclamation point): could represent different culture hubs

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