A FUTURE FOR ALL OF US
PART 2

BUTTERFLY LAB
for Immigrant Narrative Strategy

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REPORT + RESEARCH REPORT + REVISED NARRATIVE TOOLKIT

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Executive Summary

THE BUTTERFLY LAB FOR IMMIGRANT NARRATIVE STRATEGY launched in June 2020 to advance pro-immigrant narratives that recognize and honor the humanity of immigrants and advance freedom and justice for all.

We reported on our initial phase of work, which spanned June 2020 to December 2021, in a previous report. In that Phase 1 report, we named the contradiction that all of us who are working for a pro-immigrant future are confronting: while a majority of Americans support the idea that migrants, immigrants, and refugees deserve to belong and thrive, they are also demobilized in supporting the advancement of pro-immigrant policies and immigration reform. These findings echoed another landmark report that had been released in 2018, which found that support for immigrants and immigration seemed broad, but was not deeply felt, even by audiences whom we thought would be our allies.

But more importantly, we argued that narrative was the way forward for the pro-immigrant movement. We must advance policy wins to materially improve conditions. But what the last decade has also shown us is that narrative is the level at which society moves – or is blocked from moving – toward a better, freer world. Narrative, like culture, moves before policy.

We developed a strong belief that the pro-immigrant movement could make progress on the narrative front, particularly if we worked together around shared values and a long-term vision, won over multiple audiences at the same time, connected our narrative ecosystem, invested in experimentation, and most of all, articulated an irresistible future that includes all of us.

A year later, as we report on this final phase of our work, we recognize that present conditions still seem daunting. What we wrote back then still seems true: "Right now, anti-immigrant forces continue to shape the dominant narratives around migrants, immigrants, and refugees—that they are exploitable, expendable, criminal, and unworthy of equal treatment. These dominant narratives have fostered policies that terrorize migrants, immigrants, and refugees emotionally, economically, and physically. They protect a harmful status quo."

In the first months of the Lab in 2021, the Biden administration began its term with a Democratic majority in both chambers of Congress, yet was unable to secure momentum to advance immigration reform. In 2022, a midterm election year, we saw the Trump-packed Supreme Court put DACA, refugee and asylee rights, and educational rights for undocumented immigrants at risk. Opponents continued to use immigrants to mobilize

their supporters. For example, right-wing governors in Texas and Florida forcibly relocated migrants to New York and Massachusetts to demonstrate their animus toward immigrants and pro-immigrant policies.

But because of our work, we continue to be very hopeful about the future of the pro-immigrant movement. What we present here represents almost three years of intensive work done at all scales of the movement, from the local to the national and global, across the breadth of the narrative ecosystem, and in all kinds of narrative work. All of this work points toward an increased interest in narrative, as well as a desire to build stronger narrative ecosystems and aligned narrative strategy.

> **We believe that an aligned narrative strategy and increased narrative capacity can empower the pro-immigrant movement to win an enduring pro-immigrant majority.**

In the first report we laid out the case for narrative, and we offered tools and frameworks for individuals and organizations to build their capacity around narrative. In this report we show you how those learnings, as well as new research on what moves audiences toward a pro-immigrant mindset, can be applied at all scales — in individual and organizational work and across the movement. We suggest that you read and use both reports in tandem.

In 2022, our final phase of work focused on advancing and aligning narrative strategy and building narrative capacity in the pro-immigrant movement.

Central to both goals was our Narrative System, a set of six deep narratives that describe a shared destination, a worldview that we want to inspire a new majority to adopt. These deep narratives inform the world that we want to co-create as part of that new majority.

This Narrative System, along with our other tools such as the Narrative Pyramid, allowed individuals and organizations to develop and align their strategy, and increase their narrative capacity. It helps align movement work across diverse issues, timelines, forms, and approaches, and builds narrative ecosystems.

We encourage you to continue to use the Narrative System to find how your work may intersect with others' work, to explore collaborations and collective work, and to continue to build and align the narrative ecosystems around you.

"

In order to build the pro-immigrant majority that we know is possible, our movement must increase its narrative capacity and advance aligned, informed, rigorous narrative strategy.

As we in the Lab built narrative capacity in the movement through our research, training, and coaching, we learned that we have exciting opportunities to build a narrative infrastructure for a narrative strategy that increases the commitment of core audiences and wins over stretch audiences to a pro-immigrant and pro-immigration future.

Specifically, we learned that a successful narrative strategy will need to:

- Be rigorous in defining target audiences.

- Advance persuasive stories based on what target audiences value and need.

- Embrace a diversity of stories and build narrative plenitude, where many kinds of immigrant stories are presented with complexity and humanity.[1]

- Present a better, freer future for all to move audiences toward a pro-immigrant mindset.

- Acknowledge and address audiences' fear of change to help them overcome fear-based opposition narratives.

Finally, in this report, you will find many more ideas about how we can move forward together, wherever you may work in the pro-immigrant movement. You will find:

- Detailed descriptions and learnings from all of our programs, which may serve as a blueprint for developing future directions in narrative capacity-building;

- A revised toolkit that outlines how you may be able to take a narrative project from concept to reality to impact measurement;

- The findings from our extensive research, which offer us paths forward for our narrative strategy and narrative work to move a majority of audiences; as well as much more.

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1   We are indebted to Viet Thanh Nguyen for this idea. See: https://vietnguyen.info/2018/viet-thanh-nguyen-and-vu-tran-narrative-plentitude-talks-at-google

Whether you are an artist-practitioner hoping to create work more aligned with the movement, an organizer working to move constituencies beyond the life of a particular campaign, a funder or philanthropist interested in supporting local, regional or national work, or a scholar or researcher wanting to measure the impact of narrative on broader change, you can find in both of our reports a number of ideas, tools, and frameworks that have been tested. We offer all these learnings as trailheads for your journeys ahead.

When movements appear to be at their lowest ebb, narrative has been a consistent and proven source of regeneration and progress. We are all still reckoning with the fears, anxieties, and isolation of the pandemic, increasing climate volatility, the culture wars, and anti-Black violence. Americans are searching for a way toward a better future. We can activate the belief that migrants, immigrants, and refugees are central to our brighter, shared future, and that a healthy, efficient, and human-centered immigration process is part of that future. We can work together to co-create a shared future for us all.

Butterfly Lab Phase 2 Overview

THE LIFE OF THE BUTTERFLY LAB FOR IMMIGRANT NARRATIVE STRATEGY, launched in June 2020, has spanned a difficult period for pro-immigrant advocates. But our work over the past three years makes us heartened and hopeful that we can build an enduring pro-immigrant majority. We learned about promising narrative directions, what can move audiences to join us, and how we can strengthen our pro-immigrant movement with stronger narrative capacity and more aligned, better informed narrative strategy.

We wrap up our work now with a strong belief: the pro-immigrant majority is waiting to be organized. People want to believe in a brighter future for all of us. Our work is to articulate that future and draw in a majority of people to invest themselves in building this future together with us. We can accomplish this through aligned narrative strategy and expanded narrative capacity.

The Butterfly Lab for Immigrant Narrative Strategy was launched to advance pro-immigrant narratives that recognize and honor the humanity of immigrants and advance freedom and justice for all. We reported on Phase 1 of our work in March 2022.

In Phase 1, we worked with a cohort of sixteen immigrant-rights leaders, cultural strategists, and artists to develop an innovative approach to narrative strategy, tested powerful frameworks and tools to build the movement's skills in narrative project design, conducted research to learn how to move audiences toward pro-immigrant narratives, identified and built stronger narrative ecosystems, and helped narrative actors in the movement to think and work toward greater alignment.

We also developed a set of concepts, tools, and frameworks that serve as a shared foundation for narrative strategy and project design. We offered our learnings in a report accompanied by the Butterfly Lab Narrative Design toolkit, a stand-alone resource for individuals, organizations, and movement groups to develop and deepen the impact of their narrative projects and strategies.

One of the most important breakthroughs was a framework we call a Narrative System, which the cohort of sixteen pro-immigrant leaders collectively generated, and which we cover in detail in our first report as well as our toolkit. The Butterfly Lab Narrative System articulated six deep narratives: abundance, interdependence, belonging, safety, freedom to thrive, and

dignity. Together, they describe a shared destination, a worldview that we want to inspire a new majority to adopt. These deep narratives inform the world that we want to co-create as part of that new majority.

The Narrative System served as the organizing conceptual framework for the Butterfly Lab's work in 2022, which included capacity building, movement alignment, research, and at-scale narrative project prototyping. Just as deep narratives should organize how we develop messages, stories, and narratives in our projects, the Narrative System serves as a way to align our work across diverse issues, timelines, forms, and approaches. This conceptual framework allowed us to scale up our work in 2022.

Interdependence
We recognize our interdependence with each other and with all life. We recognize that our fate is interconnected with each other's, and so we practice mutuality.

Abundance
We recognize that there is enough for all if we live in alignment and the right relationship with the world around us, practicing love, care, community, and regeneration. When we center mindsets of sufficiency and generosity, resources can flourish into abundance. We call people toward an abundance of imagination, to make a leap with us toward our shared future.

Belonging
We see each other, welcome each other, and call each other into community. We recognize and respect the diversity of our peoples and communities, acknowledging differences as invigorating and powerful assets that push us toward transformation. We see each other's joys and struggles with clear eyes, and care for each other as if our own. We recognize the ways that systems have oppressed and harmed people differently and make equity our central practice.

Narrative System for our FUTURE

Safety
We collaborate as communities to ensure collective wellbeing and peace with justice. We build these solutions in community and use equity as our guiding principle, seeking to repair the harm against those most impacted.

Dignity
We believe in the inherent value and dignity of all life that exists. All should be able to exist and express their pride in being, practicing and transmitting their identities, such as their cultures, languages, and spiritual beliefs, as long as they do not harm or debase the dignity of others.

Freedom to Thrive
We believe all beings should thrive and that communities and cultures should have equal agency to make decisions about their lives, relationships, communities, and futures. In balance and alignment with our world, we should be able to pursue our dreams, engage in quality and fulfilling work, and live with joy, dignity, and love, regardless of race, national origin, gender identity, class, caste, religion, and ability.

We sought to take the ideas we had co-created with our brilliant cohort members, our partners, and funders out of the hothouse and to the movement as a whole. We chose to focus on learnings that would help us to advance narrative strategy and help to build the movement's narrative capacity.

We also focused on upskilling and aligning the movement, lifting up some of the most exciting narrative work in the field, and discovering the narratives and deep narratives that would create an enduring pro-immigrant majority.

In partnership with The Opportunity Agenda, Worthy Strategy Group, and our Chrysalis Lab projects, as well as with other partners, friends, and associates, we applied and tested concepts, content, and narratives to see what deep narratives might best help us to build a pro-immigrant majority. We integrated these learnings into a process that included prototyping narrative projects, coaching with our partners, and consulting with many other narrative practitioners in the movement.

From all of this work, we offer below future directions in narrative strategy, along with deep discussions of the work that may be used as examples of how we can build narrative capacity in the movement.

Phase 2 Topline Accomplishments

» We built narrative capacity in the movement, fostering widespread adoption of the Butterfly Lab's approach, narrative system, tools, curriculum, and pedagogy.

» We refined existing tools and developed new tools to assist practitioners in becoming more rigorous, collaborative, and successful in their narrative project design.

» We supported leading-edge narrative projects to reach scale and provide deep learnings for the movement.

» We fostered better informed, more aligned narrative strategy. Together with The Opportunity Agenda, we experimented with groundbreaking narrative research methodologies and conducted broad national research that gives the movement paths forward to winning.

» We consulted, coached, and convened key immigrant narrative leaders and their organizations to help create a more aligned and intentional narrative strategy for the movement.

Butterfly Lab Phase 2 Programs

In 2022, we built four programs to advance and align narrative strategy and build narrative capacity in the pro-immigrant movement:

The Chrysalis Lab

An intensive, experimental lab for 4 select narrative projects working at scale, defined as the ability to reach and impact a significant number of people or the ability to scale a project up from a small audience up to a significant number of people (scalability or replicability). Supported by experts in narrative research, the lab focused on reaching stretch audiences in forms and areas important to the movement.

Community of Practice

A free training, technical assistance, and coaching program to strengthen the movement and narrative ecosystem.The program involved teaching and distributing our open-source tools, toolkit, curriculum, and pedagogy to the movement. It included basic and advanced trainings, as well as customized one-on-one coaching and technical assistance for leaders and organizational teams.

Research

A program to deepen and extend the research learnings of Phase 1 through a process of uncovering what kinds of storytelling elements, narratives, deep narratives, and narrative projects can move stretch audiences to become part of an enduring pro-immigrant majority.

Leadership Strategy

Facilitation and convening of narrative leaders and actors to more deeply forge intentional and strategic alignment across issues, timelines, and methods, including working within and across organizations.

In the following sections, we discuss our learnings from the work we did in these programs, particularly about directions forward for the movement. Finally, we offer appendices and these indispensable resources for practitioners, including:
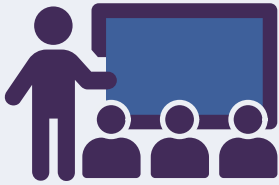
- A revised toolkit around narrative project and strategy
- A more detailed research report that expands on our learnings below.

We present this report with humility and the hope that our work can help to inform a movement we deeply believe in. In the Lab, we spoke a lot about journeys and destinations. Justice remains the horizon toward which we move. It has been an honor to be on this journey with so many of you, and we hope that our work may serve as a guide, a constellation if you will, in our collective journey to a future for all of us.

By The Numbers:
The Butterfly Lab Phase 2

12,000	Within a 9-month span, the Butterfly Lab's Phase 1 report and toolkit was downloaded nearly 12,000 times, Race Forward's fastest downloaded report ever.
	Over a 7-month period, our Community of Practice program trained 2,000 individuals in our narrative approach, narrative strategy, and narrative design tools and frameworks.
$80,000	Our Chrysalis Lab selection process fielded 89 applications for 4 projects. Selected projects each received an $80,000 grant and were supported with extensive coaching, technical assistance, impact research and analysis, and evaluation.
	Our impact research for the Chrysalis Lab surveyed over 600 people in person and 3600 people online.
16,000+	Our movement research surveyed more than 16,000 people over 9 rounds of testing.

What We Learned

OVER A TWO YEAR-PERIOD, THE BUTTERFLY LAB LEARNED A LOT about how the movement can advance a more aligned narrative strategy that can move audiences toward building an enduring pro-immigrant majority. We also learned about how the movement can build narrative capacity through using more rigorous best practices, targeted resourcing, and ecosystem building.

Our learnings fell into two broad categories:

Narrative Strategy

These learnings came from the extensive research that we conducted as well as from the Chrysalis Lab projects that were conducted at scale. They gave us insights into how we can move audiences toward a pro-immigrant majority – which will need to include:

- Audiences who are already with us, whom we call *core audiences*, and
- Audiences we believe should be with us but whose commitment to immigrants and immigration has not been strong, and
- Audiences some may consider to be unreachable.

These last two audiences we call "*stretch audiences*." We want to convert all these audiences to core audiences.

Our movement research and Chrysalis Lab projects provided us with insights into how to onramp these different audiences toward an enduring pro-immigrant majority. Below we present our broad learnings and some more specific insights from our Chrysalis Lab projects that offer directions toward a more rigorous, informed, and aligned narrative strategy.

Narrative Capacity

These learnings came from the work that we did to build learning and capacity in the movement, especially around supporting upskilling in narrative design and weaving together narrative ecosystems. We established common definitions and best practices that individuals and organizations can use for narrative design (see our revised toolkit).

Over the year, we worked and consulted closely with many organizations at all levels and scales, from grassroots community work to transnational work around climate justice. We learned a lot about what works best in narrative design practice, as well as about what the movement needs to continue to develop its narrative capacity. Our wide scope gave us insights into the necessary standards of rigor required for successful narrative work, the kinds

of resources that can accelerate, and the ways in which narrative ecosystem building and alignment can best occur. Below we offer our learnings around how we can continue to build narrative capacity across the movement.

DIRECTIONS FOR NARRATIVE STRATEGY

Our Narrative System includes the deep narratives that we believe create a pro-immigrant worldview and represents the destination towards which we want to bring all of our audiences. But how do we develop strategies to move audiences from the toxic deep narratives that drive the current status quo to the deep narratives of our pro-immigrant Narrative System? This question was at the core of the research and prototyping we've conducted over the past year.

Our research had two phases. In the first, we partnered with The Opportunity Agenda and Worthy Strategy Group (with support from Kirk Cheyfitz Political Strategies) to conduct qualitative research through a metaphor elicitation process.[2] This phase allowed us to identify some of the underlying drivers of attitudes about immigration and what audiences would need to support a future where all people could make the choice to move where their lives would be best.

In the second phase we turned these learnings into content and used randomized controlled trials to test which themes, images, and concepts would successfully move audiences toward a pro-immigrant mindset and inoculate them against fear-based opposition narratives. We worked closely with Grow Progress, Riki Conrey from Harmony Labs, and Milan de Vries to assist with our testing and analysis in this phase.

Photos by Ridwan Adhami
Courtesy of Omar Offendum | Damascus Gate LLC

2 Portions of our report originally appeared as a research brief co-published by the Butterfly Lab and The Opportunity Agenda to report findings on our joint research from the Belonging Study. Research was conducted by Gretchen Barton. We gratefully acknowledge Charles Sherman from The Opportunity Agenda, who contributed writing to parts of the "Where Our Audiences Are Now" section.

Simultaneously, we supported our Chrysalis Lab projects to measure their impact with design and analytical support from Lucy Odigie-Turley with Odigie-Turley Consulting.

Our research report (starting on page 104) gives the full context and findings from our testing. Here we provide a summary of what we learned. We hope that these learnings may inform the movement in developing winning narrative strategies.

WHERE AUDIENCES ARE NOW

People dream of a better future.

Across all audience segments and ideologies, people dream of creating a peaceful world that is better for everyone, where everyone can choose to live wherever their life would be best, where everyone can thrive, where we invest in our future so we can leave the world a better place than we found it. They want a future that is calm, safe, and orderly, and where the rules make sense and are followed. They long for community and want a world where families, communities, and neighboring nations reconnect. They dream of a better, safer, more secure future for their kids. They envision a future where there is enough for everyone, where communities help and celebrate each other, and where people work together to solve problems.

And they want a better immigration system.

We found that beliefs about immigration and immigrants don't track cleanly along partisan lines. Pro-immigrant values were strong across all audience segments, and our interview participants — no matter their ideology — expressed having twice as much confidence in immigrants over the American people. They agreed that the immigration system is broken and harming immigrants and non-immigrants alike. People in all audience segments described the current system as impossible to maintain, unenforceable, and unfairly applied.

But fear and bias often outweigh audiences' pro-immigrant values.

We have seen repeatedly through our research that most people — across all segments — hold deeply seeded pro-immigrant values. But right now, audiences are scared. They are not sure if they're safe - from pandemics, guns, climate change, or war. They don't feel valued and don't feel heard. On top of that, every audience segment revealed anxieties sown by fear-based anti-immigrant dominant narratives: they're afraid of "chaos" at the border, "criminals" and "terrorists" whom they believe are trying to get into the country, and of demographic change.

We heard from interviewees that rules and structure would make them feel less afraid and help them support a future that is safe and orderly in which all are free to move. But when we tested content that affirmed rules and structure or reframed what safety might look like, we did not see those elements consistently contribute to moving any of our audience segments toward more pro-immigrant positions. We suspect we see these inconsistencies because, as immigrants and organizers have long pointed out, racism is playing a role in how this fear is activated against immigrants. Our suspicion is that the need for safety and order grows from an anti-immigrant paradigm, not the other way around.

PATHS FORWARD

People envision and desire a pro-immigrant future where moving freely across borders benefits all of us. But racism is real and it drives the fear that prevents us from getting to the better future that everyone already wants. What helps audiences move from merely expressing pro-immigrant notions to activating a pro-immigrant mindset? How do we move people past their racism and bias? Our work has begun to answer these questions, revealing some clear paths forward.

The current narrative paradigm around immigration is built on racialized fear, specifically the fears of chaos, danger, scarcity, and change. Based on our work, we believe that moving audiences away from fear and toward a pro-immigrant narrative paradigm may be possible when we show them the future we already know they already want.

The strategy of some of the most successful opposition narratives is about painting a picture of the future that is chaotic, dangerous, Zero Sum, and terrifying. One of the most extreme narratives has been making astonishing headway recently. Known as the Great Replacement Theory, this narrative brings all of these elements together, arguing that immigrants and other groups are displacing and marginalizing whites. With the specter of this dystopian future attached to immigrants and immigration, it becomes hard for audiences to imagine solutions.

Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition in front of mural by Cosby Hayes showing the strength of the community and movement. TIRRC staff and members canvassing the neighborhood in 2021 in Nashville, TN.

But our job is not, as researcher Riki Conrey affirmed for us, "to play on the opposition's field. We have our own story to tell. We don't want to define success just by overcoming the opposition's success." So we tested content that we felt would evoke the world we want to create. Much of our content had a significant impact in moving audiences, most surprisingly with some of the most conservative audiences.

The content that was able to increase support for immigrants and immigration in the face of the opposition's toxic dystopian narratives — even among audiences we expected to be the most resistant — featured stories that both addressed audiences'

fear of cultural, societal or personal change while describing a pro-immigrant future where the freedom to move is available to everyone.

> ## Our research showed that the freedom to move is a powerful idea with potential to persuade all audiences.

We know this idea holds power for immigrants who attempt to exercise this freedom. But we found it holds power for stretch audiences, too. When stretch audiences were able to see how they could also benefit from free movement, it opened them to think about immigration from a different paradigm. When they were able to imagine themselves as having this freedom, they were more open to extending that same freedom to others.

Our core audiences respond to calls for action on what's "right" or "humanitarian". But we found that stretch audiences want to see immigration as a two-way street, where there is mutual benefit. We tried many ways of illustrating mutual benefit in our testing, and we had the most success with stories describing a world in which everyone has the freedom to move.

To help you craft effective, persuasive stories that build pro-immigrant support, we offer these three findings from our research:

- **We can create persuasive stories for specific audiences by understanding what journey they each need and then designing narratives and stories accordingly.** We found that to move audiences, we needed to take them on a journey that ends with a positive vision of what life could be. But there are important differences in storytelling that persuade different audiences; see our Audience Snapshot section to learn what worked for different audiences. Regardless of what stories we told, our storytelling was future-oriented, designed to move audiences toward our long-term goal of a pro-immigrant paradigm.

- **Acknowledging and addressing audiences' fear of change helps clear a path for people to overcome fear-based opposition narratives.** Audiences' fear of change seems to grow from a core fear of loss – losing control, losing a way of life, or losing status and the ability to thrive. We developed content to test how we might move people away from a fear of change. We started where people were at by acknowledging emotions or anxieties in a non-judgmental way, and ended with a story of change that included those audiences. We didn't validate those fears, but instead showed how change could be better for us all, or showed how change is part of a larger story of the endurance of our shared values.

- **Telling stories of a positive, hopeful future are a critical bridge to a pro-immigrant mindset.** Especially for audiences primed for Zero-Sum thinking, it was important to illustrate how a pro-immigrant future is better for everyone, including them. Stories about the future are where we most effectively activated audiences' desire for the freedom to move. We found it effective to paint a picture of the future without conceptual words like "justice" or "equity", while describing the tangible benefits of a future in which those things were true. We also found it helpful to include hints of a structured, accessible immigration process as part of the future — not by mentioning systems directly, but by describing the results of having an easy and efficient immigration process.

We offer more details about what persuades different audiences in the box below, followed by two examples of successful content. For more details on these lessons, additional examples of the content we tested, and to see how far different audiences moved toward pro-immigrant support, please read our accompanying research report.

WHAT PERSUADES DIFFERENT AUDIENCES:
A Closer Look

To understand how attitudes differ across the population, we used Harmony Labs' Narrative Observatory Audiences, a way to segment audiences according to their core values and cultural consumption, rather than the more common audience segmentation strategies of differentiating by demographics, geography, or political affiliation. A values-based segmentation allows us to understand audiences relative to the culture and narratives in which they are steeped, and can reveal unexpected insights into where audiences have commonalities or differences, what motivates them, and what can persuade them.

Distilled here is what we know about each audience segment, what we learned about what moves them toward a pro-immigrant mindset, and the storytelling elements that facilitate that shift:

AUDIENCE SEGMENTS & THEIR CORE VALUES:

PURSUE

People Power

If You Say So

COMMUNITY
All kinds of people coming together can fix the system.

AUTONOMY
There may be no one way to succeed, but freedom to make our own choices is paramount.

WE

ME

Tough Cookies

Don't Tread on Me

ORDER
Playing by the rules is the key to success.

AUTHORITY
Strong leadership and hard work is the solution.

PROTECT

Adapted from Harmony Labs. For more information, see
https://obiaudiences.org/audiences/

People Power:

Community-minded, politically engaged, and ready to fight for system reform to solve social issues. They skew college-educated and Democrat and believe all types of people coming together will create change. Many people in progressive social movements are People Power. We often consider this segment to be part of our core audience, but they also can be surprisingly soft in their commitment to supporting immigrants.

What Persuades People Power:

Pro-immigrant support in this group is already high, and we were able to increase their support with content featuring personal stories as well as emotion-based idealistic content. Though justice-oriented, they appear to also be influenced by anti-immigrant and other racially-motivated, fear-based narratives. Islamophobia surfaced strongly in this audience. When faced with a fear-based opposition narrative based on the Great Replacement Theory, their support only increased if we both addressed their fear of change and described a positive future where everyone has the freedom to move.

If You Say So:

Independent realists who know the system is broken but are skeptical that there are real solutions to society's problems. They span all races, skew younger, and value choice and autonomy. More interested in enjoying life than joining movements, this is an audience you'll more likely find at a party or playing video games than at a protest. We often find them at the edge of our core audiences or as stretch audiences.

What Persuades If You Say So:

These audiences had the highest baseline agreement with every pro-immigrant measurement question we asked. More than any other audience segment, they are moved by personal stories, particularly stories with "striving" themes or stories about pushing through the fear of change to enjoy cross-cultural experiences. Fear of change, however, doesn't seem to be an issue with them. Nor do they need a vision of the future to move them, possibly because they already have the ability to imagine a better future. They were moved by the widest variety of content of any audience segment, so long as it demonstrated pragmatism, striving, or pleasure-seeking.

Tough Cookies:

Family-first rule followers who believe that while the system might be broken, hard work can create success. They skew older, span all political parties and love content featuring good deeds and helping hands. They value order and are cautious—of new people, new ideas, changes in the status quo, and more. We often encounter them as stretch audiences and sometimes as opposition audiences.

What Persuades Tough Cookies:

To unlock their pro-immigrant mindset, Tough Cookies need to be reassured that change is natural and positive and that they have a place in a pluralistic future. They need stories forecasting a better future that also benefits them. When faced with a Great Replacement Theory-based opposition narrative, the only thing that overcame it for them was a story that both addressed their fear of change and described a positive future where everyone has the freedom to move.

Don't Tread On Me:

Achievement-oriented, they are strong believers that equal opportunity already exists. They're idealistic, but they're worried they need to be in control to make a better future happen. They skew white, rural and Republican, and value authority, hard work, and determined leadership. We often encounter them as opposition audiences, but they can become stretch audiences.

What Persuades Don't Tread On Me:

Unlike Tough Cookies, Don't Tread on Me audiences are less fearful of change. They love stories that paint a picture of a world where we can all be friends; where we get to experience aspects of other cultures; where people contribute and work hard; and where systems operate efficiently. Though they respond strongly to personal stories, they are primed for "good immigrant"/"bad immigrant" stories and don't respond well to stories with more complex humans. They were able to overcome a Great Replacement Theory-based opposition narrative after viewing content that both addressed fear of change and described a positive future where everyone has the freedom to move.

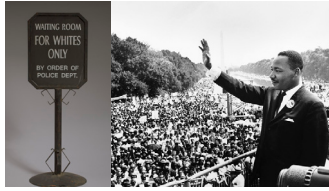## Black, Latinx, and AAPI Audiences:

When we analyzed the results according to audiences' race, we noticed that what moved our Black, Latinx, and AAPI audiences was strikingly similar. To unlock a pro-immigrant mindset, they responded best to stories prominently featuring diverse characters, storytelling that referenced our nation's history with racism and framed change as part of a larger arc toward progress.

Anatomy of a Story

Addressing fear of change

America has changed a lot in the past 245 years. From outhouses to running water. From exclusion to opportunity.

With so much talk of immigration, it can feel like America is changing again. But history shows that change has made our lives easier, safer, and freer.

Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

Hulton Deutsch / Corbis Premium Historical via Getty Images

Imagine in 50 years people can easily travel in and out of the country because we have a safe immigration process that makes it easy.

Evgenia Parajanian / Shutterstock.com

Presenting a positive future

We know who is coming in and out of the country because the freedom to move is available to everyone and the rules are straightforward and easy to follow.

Evgenia Parajanian / Shutterstock.com

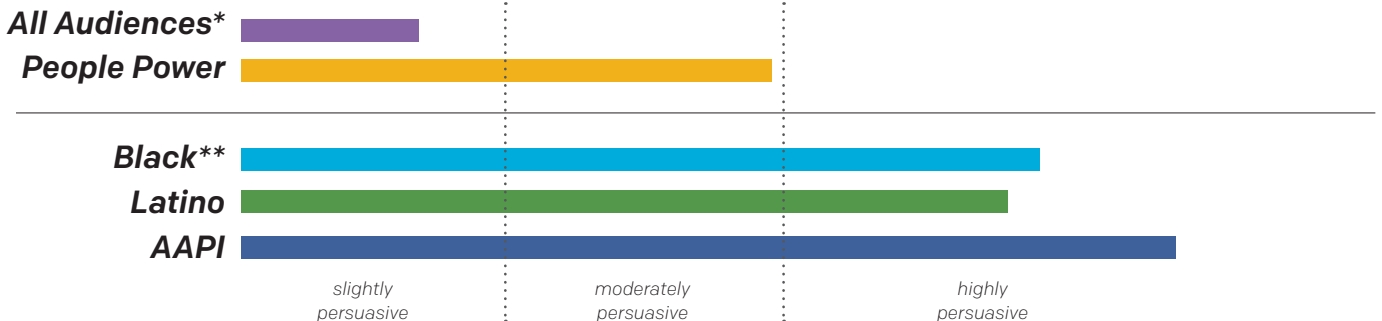**Illustrating the shared benefits of this future**

New arrivals are welcomed into communities and we all have friends from many different places. If we want to move to another country, we can.

We all thrive - those of us who were born here and those of us who moved here from other countries.

How This Content Influenced Pro-Immigrant Support

We tested the content above against opposition content featuring the Great Replacement Theory and immigrant "inundation" narratives. This graph shows the measured increase in pro-immigrant support after viewing both this content and the opposition content.

All Audiences*
People Power

Black**
Latino
AAPI

| slightly persuasive | moderately persuasive | highly persuasive |

* Only statistically significant results are included, for all audience and demographic segments.
** Racial demographic data includes respondents from all values-based audience segments.

Anatomy of a Story

Modeling a character overcoming their fear of change

This year, my granddaughter married an immigrant from Mexico. I love my granddaughter, but I was worried. Would their wedding even feel like a wedding? What would it be like to have an immigrant in the family?

Rocketclips, Inc. / Shutterstock.com

Their celebration was beautiful. It was full of joy and love like any other. We danced to a mariachi band, then a brass band. We ate Mexican cookies alongside wedding cake. It reminded me of my wedding, where my husband's family tried pierogies for the first time in honor of my Polish grandparents.

But seeing how impossible it was for some of my grandson-in-law's family to get visas just to come to the wedding, it's made me wonder about how we could make a better process.

Presenting an efficient future

Imagine if immigration worked like an airport. If security lines were run efficiently and smoothly with people safely arriving and leaving.

Imagine if we all could choose to live where our life would be best. Imagine in 50 years - when my great-grandkids will be grown - that we have a safe immigration process that makes it easy.

Positive vision rooted in shared values

In America, our traditions come from all over the world. We might not all look the same, but we do share enduring American values: the freedom to make the right choices for our families, to give our kids and grandkids a better life than we had, and the love of a great wedding band!

Digital Vision / Photodisc via Getty Images

This story combined two high-performing pieces of content, about a grandmother overcoming her fear of change, and a piece that imagined the immigration system working as smoothly as an airport.

How This Content Influenced Pro-Immigrant Support

This graph shows the measured increase in pro-immigrant support after viewing this content.

Don't Tread on Me

If You Say So

slightly persuasive *moderately persuasive* *highly persuasive*
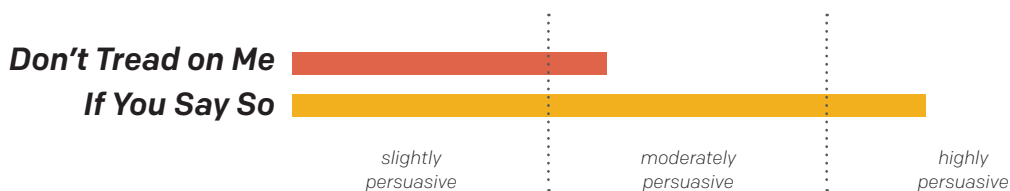
Additional Narrative Strategy Learnings From The Chrysalis Lab

The Chrysalis Lab offered grants to four innovative, scalable, and visionary narrative and cultural projects and provided research support to measure their impact. These projects included: Intelligent Mischief's Archipelago immersive arts installation project in Memphis, Tennessee; a musical performance called Little Syria; a writer's room/story incubator called the Muslim Futures Project; and a deep canvassing project led by the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC). Working with Lucy Odigie-Turley, Grow Progress, and Riki Conrey from Harmony Labs, we used a variety of methods to study both in-person experiences and digital content, resulting in three primary findings.

Islamophobia and stereotypes of young Muslim men as violent are pervasive for most audiences. One impact of the egregious lack of Muslim-led representation in the media, entertainment, and culture has been the dominance of anti-Muslim, fear-based narratives. Between Little Syria and the Muslim Futures Project, we tested a variety of stories centering Muslim characters, mythology, history, and/or values, and we were able to see movement among many audiences toward embracing Muslim immigrants. We have an opportunity to transform attitudes and beliefs at scale, but we will need narrative plentitude: many more truthful stories told by Muslim immigrants and communities.

Many Black Americans already see themselves as part of a global African diaspora and they highly support reparations for all Black people living in the U.S., including immigrants. Intelligent Mischief was interested in directly addressing Black audiences susceptible to anti-immigrant American Descendant of Slavery (ADOS) narratives, particularly those that connect to the debate over reparations by distinguishing between Black "descendants of slavery" who are worthy of receiving reparations and immigrants and "descendants of immigrants" who are not. But many Black Americans are also doubtful that reparations will ever become a reality, and there is a paucity of pro-reparations narratives in the mainstream. Advancing pro-immigrant, pro-reparations narratives will require investment in artists and activists to develop and deliver these narratives through a variety of mediums.

Deep canvassing projects can reduce anti-immigrant bias. We already know that deep canvassing can be very successful in moving stretch audiences. What we learned is that, while efforts to date have largely focused on moving audiences on policy questions, they can also successfully challenge bias. More testing needs to be done to see if and how such projects may accomplish both at the same time.

For more information on the Chrysalis Lab, including more specific findings, see the What We Did and "The Chrysalis Lab: A Closer Look" sections below.

PORTAL TO THE PRO-IMMIGRANT FUTURE

In all of our storytelling about the future, we describe a pro-immigrant, pluralist future where freedom of movement is the norm and everyone can thrive. But while every audience segment is on board with a future where people have the freedom to move and thrive, they differ in how they envision the future. Justice-oriented base audiences (People Power) are the only ones who explicitly embrace pluralism and difference. For more order- and authority-focused audiences (Tough Cookies and Don't Tread On Me), their support of the stories we presented did not grow from a desire for a pluralist future, but rather "a unified future". This future is one where diversity is okay because there is still a degree of sameness and unity – values are shared, people get along, assimilation is a measure of success, and everyone is rowing in the same direction. However, though there are important differences between the pluralist future we are moving toward and the unified future these audiences long for, we do not believe the two are diametrically opposed.

> **From our research, the broad desire for a unified future shares roots in three deep narratives that we in the Butterfly Lab have identified as key to a pluralist future: Abundance, Belonging, and Freedom to Thrive.**

We can think of these three shared deep narratives as a portal that creates the openings for a paradigm shift. Telling stories rooted in these narratives can move audiences closer to a pro-immigrant worldview.

Abundance

Audiences are experiencing fear and scarcity in their everyday lives right now and long for a future where that is not the norm. Abundance in a pro-immigrant, pluralist future is about living in a world where there can be enough for everyone if we live in alignment with the

world around us. It's about practicing love, care, community, and regeneration. It's about centering mindsets of sufficiency and generosity.[3]

We don't need everyone to share precisely the same vision of a pluralist future to be able to realize it. Just imagining a better future is an act of abundance, and we believe there is potential in nurturing what appeals to each audience as we tell stories about the abundant future. Effective storytelling can help them imagine a world where diversity makes us strong, a world where there can be what the activist/organizer Linda Sarsour calls "unity without uniformity."

Belonging

Belonging in a pro-immigrant, pluralist future is about recognizing and respecting the diversity of our peoples and communities, acknowledging differences as invigorating and powerful assets, and welcoming each other. It's about seeing each other in our joys and struggles, calling each other into community, and making equity a central practice.[4]

It didn't take much to persuade audiences that immigrants belong in the U.S. But the continuing popularity of "good immigrant" stories tells us that many may have a way to go in embracing the complexity of immigrants. Our research showed that we don't need to bend our vision of the future according to what audiences seem ready to accept now. We saw persuasive power in sharing a vision of the future where we all belong.

> **In a pro-immigrant paradigm, our job is to show people how they belong and thrive in our pro-immigrant future.**

This is what addressing the fear of change is about at its heart — it is about acknowledging every person's fear of not belonging, and then showing them how their story is a valued part of our shared future.

Freedom to Thrive

Opposition narratives evoke a scarcity mindset to persuade people that we're in a zero-sum reality — that if immigrants thrive, then others will not. But we think building pro-immigrant support depends upon our ability to tell a story of how we all thrive.

3 From Butterfly Lab's Narrative System for our Future
4 Ibid

Having the Freedom to Thrive in a pro-immigrant, pluralist future is about all communities and cultures having equal agency to make decisions about their lives, relationships, communities, and futures. It's about all of us — in balance and alignment with our world — being able to pursue our dreams, engage in quality and fulfilling work, and live with joy, dignity, and love. It's about having the freedom to move where our lives would be best, and being able to live our best lives there.

BUILDING NARRATIVE CAPACITY

In Phase 2 of the Butterfly Lab, we built narrative learning and capacity in the movement, fostering widespread adoption of the Butterfly Lab's approach, narrative system, tools, curriculum, and pedagogy. We did this through a Community of Practice program that reached and trained thousands in narrative design and strategy, coached individuals and organizations at all scales of the movement, and made available our best practices in an open-source toolkit. We also supported, tested, and measured innovative practices through our Chrysalis Lab program. We built measurement practices that could help us to better understand, focus, and learn about narrative impact.

What follows are some of our learnings about narrative capacity across the movement:

There is a huge demand for trainings and desire for shared understanding of narrative design and strategy for individuals and organizations. Currently, the movement's narrative capacity is strongest in the strategic communications realm. But in this exploded cultural landscape, strategic communications reaches only a corner — audiences who are primarily consumers of national news outlets, for example. Strategic communications that includes social media, we learned, is often used now by smaller organizations and individuals to maintain relationships with their base, as opposed to expanding toward majorities. But individuals and organizations realize that "social media plus" alone approach won't work. They tools, frameworks, and approaches that help them to both maintain their core audiences while winning over stretch audiences.

Narrative capacity must develop beyond strategic communications capacity. Audiences come into contact with stories and narratives from everywhere all at once. Our movement's narrative capacity needs to catch up with an exploded digital and cultural landscape with more complex demands. Building narrative capacity requires conceptual reordering – for example, understanding how campaign messaging may connect into story-building and narrative-building work – as well as upskilling and ecosystem-building (see our toolkit).

The movement needs a stronger, more rigorous focus on its audiences. A 2018 study found that support for immigrants and immigration is not as deep as we had hoped even with the audiences we believe are most with us. In our trainings over the course of the Lab, we found that there was a high demand across the movement for learning best practices on

how to target audiences. (See the Audiences worksheet in our revised toolkit.) In the Lab, we worked with many organizations to help them to define their audiences. Reaching clarity on
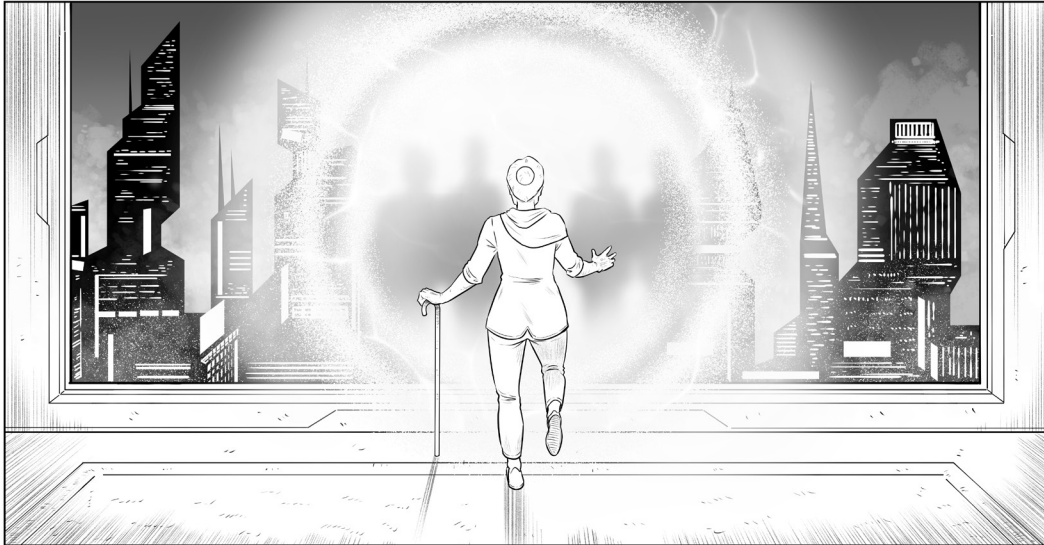
Nura of the Multiverse **written by Karim Ahmad, art by David N. Gordillo**

their audiences also helped them clarify their theory of change and strategic planning. What's true for them is true for the movement: strong narrative strategy depends on a rigorous focus on audiences.

Spread the benefits of data and research across the movement for stronger impact and better strategy. The data science revolution allows us to learn about, target, and segment audiences even more narrowly and inexpensively than ever before. The Butterfly Lab was able to take advantage of these tools to better support its prototype projects. We did this in two ways. We pushed our prototype projects to more rigorously define their target audiences and hypothesize how their work would move this audience. We also worked with researchers to better inform the prototype work and measure their impact. This process can yield better insights that can support the development of narrative strategy. Better resourcing can support local, state, regional, national, and global efforts to advance narrative design and narrative strategy.

Allow time and resources for experimentation and risk. We advanced this learning in our first report, but we learned more in this Phase about how time can help our work. The Chrysalis Lab participants stated that more time would have allowed them the chance to build deeper relations in community, better incorporate learnings into iterations of their narrative projects, and allowed them a chance to reach larger audiences with higher quality work.

Invest in narrative strategy. In the Lab, we coached many individuals and organizations into making narrative strategy a core part of their overall strategic planning using our tools. When narrative strategy becomes an alignment tool, and narrative design a regular habit, organizations can function with greater clarity. Organizations must operationalize narrative

strategy in existing work, bridge siloed teams, and grow capacity and collaboration across the narrative ecosystem. Funders should invest in movement leaders, artists, and organizations to prioritize and sustain narrative strategy, continued learning, and collaboration internally and across the movement ecosystem.

Build the narrative ecosystem. There is strong interest across the pro-immigrant movement in coalition building and narrative alignment toward the work of building narrative power. The Butterfly Lab's narrative system work offers a process for leaders to come together across issues, interests, timelines, and forms. Individuals and organizations working across different disciplines, areas of expertise (journalism, the arts, media, social psychology, data science, etc.) have a lot to learn from each other. Funders invested in advancing the pro-immigrant movement should seriously consider long-term resourcing for this kind of work.

Narrative labs work! Labs can be run at any scale of the movement, and can result in a body of shared learnings that build capacity and accelerate processes of change. The Butterfly Lab fostered experimentation, risk-taking, capacity-building, and ecosystem-building. The Narrative System, an alignment tool that is now leading many organizations to develop a narrative strategy that is moving on different issue fronts–across disciplines, timelines, and forms–may have emerged only through an intensive lab process. Additionally, participants in the Lab all cited advanced tools and frameworks, coaching, research, and cohort culture as powerful value adds to their work. They especially appreciated the rigor, trust, and camaraderie built in the Lab space.

What We Did

IN THE PREVIOUS SECTION, WE DISCUSSED WHAT WE LEARNED through our work. This section discusses what we did in Phase 2, and how this work evolved out of the learnings of our first seventeen months.

In Phase 1, we learned that the pro-immigrant movement needs to build people's imagination to close the gap between their beliefs and values and their support for pro-immigrant policies. We advanced five broad recommendations for the movement:

- Work together from an aligned narrative system that encompasses a set of shared values and long-term-vision.

- Win over multiple audiences, including stretch audiences.

- Connect and expand our narrative ecosystems.

- Invest in narrative and cultural experimentation.

- Build a bridge to the future.

We hypothesized that we could make more progress toward a pro-immigrant majority if we aligned ourselves and our diverse work across different issues, forms, approaches and timelines toward a shared future that we could articulate collectively. Using the Narrative System that sixteen immigrant narrative leaders developed as a tool for alignment and as a north star for all of our work, we developed our work in Phase 2 to fulfill three major functions:

1   Deepen learnings that can move us toward building a winning and enduring pro-immigrant majority.

Guided by the insights we gained through the prototyping process in Phase 1 and buoyed by the success of our narrative approach (described in the first report and toolkit), we focused on learning more about what narratives, deep narratives, and narrative projects might win over targeted core and stretch audiences. We did this by supporting leading-edge narrative projects with the advice of top experts and intensive research conducted in partnership with The Opportunity Agenda, Worthy Strategy Group, and Grow Progress.

2 Build broad capacity for narrative design and narrative strategy across the movement through a community of practice.

We built a community of practice in the movement by distributing our narrative curriculum, tools, and pedagogy to individuals and organizations who expressed a desire to upskill themselves. We filled the huge demand for our tools by training partner organizations and conducting a significant number of direct trainings to the movement. We made our research learnings and toolkit broadly available to the public.

3 Achieve more intentional, aligned narrative strategy across the movement.

Immigrant-narrative leaders expressed a strong desire to do more aligning of projects, goals, and work across timelines, issues, and methods. We built spaces for narrative leaders and actors to discuss, plan, and strategize how to work together in more coordinated and intentional ways.

Our four programs in Phase 2 were designed to advance narrative strategy and narrative capacity:

- **Community of Practice**: a training, technical assistance, and coaching program to strengthen the movement and narrative ecosystem.

- **Research**: a program to deepen the research learnings of Phase 1 through a process of uncovering what kinds of storytelling elements, narratives, deep narratives, and narrative projects can move stretch audiences to become part of an enduring pro-immigrant majority.

- **The Chrysalis Lab:** an intensive, experimental lab for four select narrative projects working at scale.

- **Leadership Strategy:** convenings of narrative leaders and actors to more deeply forge intentional and strategic alignment across issues, timelines, and methods, including working within and across organizations.

What follows are descriptions of the work we completed in 2022 in each of our programs except for Leadership Strategy, which was still in progress at the completion of this report.

Community Of Practice

In response to a movement-wide need for capacity-building in narrative strategy and project design, the Butterfly Lab developed the Community of Practice program. Through this program, we hoped to advance shared language around narrative work and broadly upskill individuals, movement groups, and organizations.

Using the learnings, recommendations, and tools we developed in Phase 1, we offered free trainings, coaching sessions, and technical assistance to six keystone partnerships and to the larger movement. We wanted to ensure that we built a solid baseline in narrative strategy for the pro-immigrant movement.

Our primary goals were to offer:

- An open source foundational narrative strategy curriculum informed by the Butterfly Lab's pedagogy and research findings and intended to cultivate alignment around the Butterfly Lab narrative system;

- Professional development of movement organization staff through trainings and coaching for keystone partners; and

  Movement capacity-building through open trainings for artists, organizers, and leaders on the ground.

The program's ultimate goals were to contribute to the formation of narrative infrastructure and strengthen the narrative ecosystem to move the movement toward greater alignment and build narrative power.

The Butterfly Lab trained 2,000 people in our narrative approach, tools, and frameworks.

The Butterfly Lab's approach to narrative strategy is on its way to becoming standard in the pro-immigrant movement and is being adopted widely in other racial justice movement work.

The Butterfly Lab Curriculum + Pedagogy

The curriculum we developed in Phase 1 was geared toward supporting Lab participants in developing a foundational understanding in narrative strategy and project design to create and test narrative project prototypes.

In our trainings for both Phase 1 and Phase 2, we taught the basics of narrative design, such as audience selection, narrative and project goals, research and impact, and narrative project design. We also taught an introduction session on narrative strategy, including the creation and utility of a narrative system.

In Phase 2, especially, we shared a desire for participants to fully own the trainings, remixing them for their continued learning and internal capacity-building. As we entered the design process with each partner, it became evident that ongoing development and refinement of the curriculum would be needed. We generated responsive, customized adaptations to the unique circumstances of each organization, such as differences in terminology, experience with narrative strategy, and existing organizational campaigns and workflows.

Our revised curriculum (shared in our revised toolkit below) consists of the core modules on the definitions, frameworks, and tools that are the foundation of narrative theory and practice. narrative strategy and narrative project design. It includes our main tools: the Narrative Pyramid, Narrative Design Star, and the Narrative System. Together these tools allow any individual or organization to create, develop, and refine a narrative project and a narrative strategy.

We generated responsive, customized adaptations to the unique circumstances of each organization, such as differences in terminology, experience with narrative strategy, and existing organizational workflows. For example, we customized our training to support two big anchor organizations that were in the process of merging together, clarifying their cultural strategy and organizing role in the movement. We did this by reorienting our training and follow up coaching to support organizational integration and development goals as teams, workflows, and campaign strategies merged. We also helped staff in both organizations develop shared and aligned language, skills, narrative goals and deep narratives.

"Butterfly Lab provided us with insightful training that was useful both for instigating creative reflection over our current work and for planning and preparing for upcoming projects and strategic priorities. They were kind and generous, curious and generative. The workshops were tailored to our needs, filled with interesting examples and experiences to share. We are grateful for this collaboration!"
— Débora Gastal, 350.org

Many organizations have incorporated these tools into their narrative project design and their organizational work on narrative strategy. The National Partnership for New Americans now uses the Narrative Pyramid to assess possible issue campaigns. The Center for Cultural Power uses the Narrative System to align their diverse cultural strategy projects. United We Dream is using the Butterfly Lab toolkit to operationalize their project development, and has adapted the Narrative System to articulate their strategy priorities.

Keystone Partners

Outreach and selection of the participating organizational partners began with power-mapping analysis meetings with the Butterfly Lab's advisory committee and selected alumni from the Lab's first phase. Both groups were asked for their guidance on recommending organizations based on their narrative skill, influence, and reach in the movement. The keystone organizations represent a broad spectrum of narrative work in the movement, including a broad range of issue areas, modes of work, and geographic focus.

These keystone partner organizations are:

"Working with the Butterfly Lab has been invaluable in our understanding of how to build narrative power and develop narrative strategies that will drive impact. The team is thoughtful, informed, and has deep experience in this work. With the shifting political landscape and challenges we face in the courts and legislature, we recognize that we must become more effective at changing hearts and minds if we want to be successful in our advocacy to improve the lives of low-income immigrants."

— Victoria Ballesteros,
National Immigration Law Center

The partner organizations were offered, free of charge:

Narrative Strategy Trainings

A pair of 2.5 hour trainings for the organization's staff, leadership, and collaborators designed to provide an introduction to narrative strategy with a focus on generating alignment to the Butterfly Lab's narrative system. Participating organizations learned key frameworks and tools from the Butterfly Lab Narrative Strategy Toolkit.

Coaching and Technical Assistance

Individualized coaching sessions after the trainings for the organization's narrative leadership teams to receive support for implementation and integration of narrative strategy into the organization.

Research Briefing

Invitations to the Butterfly Lab research briefing to learn about our findings and recommendations for deep narratives that were tested this year. (See below for more)

We completed a total of eleven trainings with our organizational partners, inclusive of several hundred participants.

Illustrated by Karla Rosas for United We Dream's Labor Day postcard campaign

> The Butterfly Lab team helped United We Dream connect the dots for the work that we are already driving. The trainings and resources were collaborative and tailored to our needs, allowing us to jump into the areas where we needed the most support to build staff alignment on strategy and the ecosystem. UWD is excited to integrate the Butterfly Lab's learnings and tools into our Culture Change department and to continue refining our work so that we can amplify our immigrant communities' stories!

— Sheridan Aguirre, United We Dream Network

Movement-Wide Capacity Building

In addition to the above activities, the Community of Practice program aimed to provide a number of public offerings to support the capacity-building across the movement.

We gave open-source trainings at conferences, including the Allied Media Conference, Facing Race conference, and National Immigrant Inclusion Conference. We also did an online public training for over 400 attendees in September 2022, and made it available on our Butterfly Lab website alongside all of our narrative tools.

In these sessions, we trained over 2,000 participants. Our Phase 1 report and toolkit were also very well-utilized, and were downloaded over 11,000 times in the first 9 months.

RESEARCH

We focused our research on stretch audiences.

In our research, we chose to focus on unlocking a pro-immigrant mindset amongst stretch audiences. We believe this is a prerequisite for sustained, long-term attitudinal shift amongst a majority of the population that can ultimately lead to support for policy change. We define stretch audiences as those who do not have a reliably pro-immigrant worldview, although every organization will have their own definition of stretch audiences based on the goals of their campaign, initiative or strategy.

To evaluate our success with stretch audiences, we needed to get specific. We used the Harmony Labs Narative Observatory audiences (see pages 21-23), but there are many audience segmentation and research tools available. We used these segments to select a balanced pool of interviewees, and to group our quantitative results. This helped us hone-in on the specific tactics needed to move each segment. As we described earlier, they can be quite different across each audience segment.

We used cutting-edge research methods.

Our research goal was to identify narratives, concepts, ideas, or storytelling approaches that could unlock a pro-immigrant mindset or worldview. Our process covered two phases: first, we conducted comprehensive qualitative research with 48 participants in swing states in partnership with The Opportunity Agenda and Gretchen Barton from Worthy Strategy Group using best practices from the world of psychology and neuroscience. Gretchen, with conceptual support from narrative expert Kirk Cheyfitz, used a metaphor elicitation process to identify underlying drivers of audience attitudes on immigration and what audiences would need in order to move to a more open, pro-immigrant mindset. Next, we needed to learn more

about how to put the qualitative insights into action, so we translated them into tangible concepts and storyboards that we tested using the Grow Progress Rapid Message Testing platform, a content testing tool that allows customers to easily conduct randomized controlled trials.

During our content testing, we measured for a pro-immigrant mindset in three ways:

- whether audiences agreed immigrants, including undocumented immigrants, belong in America;

- whether they agreed that people should be able to move freely in or out of the country even if it meant more immigrants moving into their neighborhoods; and

- whether they could imagine a future where moving between countries is as straightforward as getting a driver's license.

Riki Conrey of Harmony Labs and Milan de Vries offered invaluable coaching and analytical support to help us understand the extent to which we were reaching, and moving, stretch audiences. We strongly encourage engaging experts to help hone in on the process, methods and questions that best align with your goals.

We tested a lot of concepts.

We created 58 lo-fi concepts and storyboards for our content testing phase. They were made up of images and text formed into brief stories about immigrants or immigration, integrated with the specific story elements or insights we aimed to test. Our concepts were prototypes that we created ourselves. Prototyping gave us the freedom to test a large variety of elements and stories on a short timeline and budget. In turn, the volume of concepts helped us see how different elements were effective (or not) within different types of stories. We encourage others to embrace content testing using prototypes in their process before investing in content with higher production value. We were often surprised by our results and we appreciated the ability to validate or disprove our ideas early.

More content is included in our extensive Research Report, below.

THE CHRYSALIS LAB

The Chrysalis Lab launched on March 15, 2022 as a grant program to support four innovative, scalable, and visionary narrative and cultural projects. It sought to extend the prototype experimentation done in Phase 1 of the Butterfly Lab, and test our learnings and approach at scale.We defined "scale" as the ability to reach and impact a significant number of people or the ability to scale a project up from a small audience up to a significant number of people (scalability or replicability).

After a broad open call that elicited 89 applications from across the country, the final grantees were selected on criteria that included scale, innovation, audience, reach, impact, and readiness. They were chosen to represent a range of leading-edge work in the movement. Each of the projects received $80,000 grants and received extensive additional support from the Butterfly Lab staff in the form of narrative training, coaching, expert consultation, technical assistance, research, and impact evaluation. They launched and completed their projects by the end of 2022.

The Goals

The goals of the Chrysalis Lab were to:

- Incubate 4 select narrative projects at scale that represent leading-edge of work in the pro-immigrant movement.

- Learn more about how to develop narratives that move stretch audiences.

  Advance work around specific deep narratives within the narrative system.

- Generate learnings and insights about narrative design, audiences, execution, and impact evaluation.

The Process

The Chrysalis Lab process unfolded over the course of 9 months, from the selection process to the execution and evaluation of the final projects. Project planning and training occurred from June through August. Projects launched in September and were largely completed by November.

Archipelago: An Immersive Sonic Experience by Intelligent Mischief

This Lab was built on the design insights we gained from Phase 1, using an advanced, rigorous version of that curriculum and pedagogy, supplemented by expert support on impact measurement, evaluation, and analysis. The tools we developed for the Chrysalis Lab are included in our updated toolkit (link here).

The Chrysalis Lab projects were selected specifically to cover a variety of innovative forms of reaching stretch audiences. Three projects fell into the realm of arts and cultural strategy, and the other was a deep-canvassing project. We wanted to learn more about how we build a new majority by moving core and stretch audiences toward embracing a pro-immigrant worldview.

These projects were:

Intelligent Mischief, a Black-migrant futures design lab and immersive multi-platform experience called Archipelago.

Little Syria, an immersive musical theater experience.

Muslim Futures, a narrative worldbuilding and storytelling project to transform monolithic perceptions of Muslim immigrants.

Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, a deep canvassing project in Tennessee to increase local support for migrants and refugee resettlement.

Chrysalis Lab Research

In Phase 2, the Chrysalis Lab was intended to be a lab within a lab, focused on more rigorous training, project design, coaching, measurement, and execution. This process allowed us to extend our foundational curriculum into a more advanced process for learning and iterating in the following areas:

- Targeting Audiences
- Executing Narrative Projects
- Testing Narrative Impact
- Measuring Narrative Impact
- Refining Project Design

We asked each of the projects to specifically define their target audiences, to articulate a hypothesis about why and how their project could move those audiences, and to develop measures of impact and success. Our process also yielded new and more refined tools, including a revised Audiences Worksheet and Narrative Design Star tool, and a Narrative Hypothesis Worksheet.

We believe that these tools and frameworks should be widely adopted across the movement to advance strategy and ensure greater success. You will find all of these tools on pages 49-94

in our updated Butterfly Lab toolkit. Impact researcher Lucy Odigie-Turley worked closely with the projects to co-design and incorporate innovative methods of measurement, and then conducted analysis of findings for each of the projects.

In addition to collecting information during the execution of each of the projects, we tested three of the project's narratives through online digital surveys co-designed by the project leads, Butterfly Lab staffer Janelle Treibitz, and Lucy Odigie-Turley, and administered through the Grow Progress online testing platform. Riki Conrey and her Harmony Labs team supported deeper analysis of the findings, including by audience segments.

THE CHRYSALIS LAB PROJECTS: A CLOSER LOOK

Intelligent Mischief

Intelligent Mischief intended to reach young Black audiences susceptible to anti-immigrant ADOS (American Descendants of Slavery) narratives, particularly those that connect to the debate over reparations by distinguishing between Black "descendants of slavery" who are worthy of receiving reparations and immigrants and "descendants of immigrants" who are not. Instead, Intelligent Mischief hoped to invite Black people to explore global Black diasporic identity and a beautiful future, inclusive of migrants, in which all are thriving, joyful, sovereign, and free.

Their project, which began in the Butterfly Lab's Phase 1, consisted of two parts: 1) a Black Migrant Futures Design Lab that imagined a world premised on values of interdependence, belonging, abundance and dignity of all Black people, inclusive of Black migrants and 2) Archipelago, a three-day immersive festival-meets-art installation in Memphis, Tennessee, a southern Black-majority city, and a series of related immersive web experiences. The installation, built in a mall space in South Memphis, included a DJ soundclash with three dj's performing live and four more beaming in from Brazil, Australia, Ghana, and Jamaica. There was also a room of rest, a bookstore, a food truck, and other interactive touchpoints.

Their five-week world-building process engaged thinkers, artists, scholars, and community members in a deliberate, carefully designed learning process that will allow them to continue to build the work across the country. Eventually they included dozens of people in the design and production, including 2 Culture Bearers and 6 Afrofuturists, Pan Africanists, and Black Migration Advocates. Their process encouraged engagement between U.S. born people and immigrants, especially in the neighborhood where it was situated. However, the timeline of execution limited the possibility of pursuing promising connections with the community.

Intelligent Mischief incorporated pre-event surveys through emails, solicited in-house participant video interviews, and did post-event interviews. Their in-person audience and live stream totalled about 400 people. They also utilized Grow Progress to survey 800 mostly Black individuals (including 23 who identified as Latinx) to test whether an emotion-based or fact-based narrative might be more successful against a placebo and an opposition ADOS narrative.

What We Learned:

- The baseline of support for reparations is very high in the Black community, but there is also doubt that reparations will ever occur. Those with a high school education or less, those older than 55, and Democrats are the most susceptible to these doubts.

- The baseline of support for a diasporic, unified Black identity is also high. While appeals to anti-immigrant sentiment appear to be rising in the Black community, especially around the question of reparations, the audiences we tested were responsive to narratives that challenge anti-Black immigrant sentiment and affirm a diasporic Black identity.

- Fact-based narratives regarding freedom of movement tend to do better with moderates, conservatives, and audience segments which value openness. Affect-based narratives regarding Black identity tend to do poorly with conservatives but well with liberals.

> **We are actually a diverse community that is connected across borders. We wanted to ask: 'What does freedom mean to you?' If freedom means that you can go wherever you want, how does that extend to other people?**
>
> — Aisha Shillingford

Little Syria

A project that began in the Butterfly Lab Phase 1, Little Syria was Omar Offendum's powerful genre-bridging performance — spanning hip-hop, Arabic instrumentation, and ḥakawātī oral storytelling traditions of the Levant. This evening-length performance staged a slice of early 20th-century immigrant life in the heart of the Lower Manhattan New York City neighborhood known as Little Syria (1880—1940).

The Little Syria team mounted a pilot performance at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, followed by two sold-out performances at the HERE Arts Center, which they captured for future videos and a film project. They sought to build a narrative of belonging for Syrian, Arab, and Muslim Americans. But they were also surprised to learn of the performance's appeal to stretch audiences, including history-oriented conservatives and non-Arab American hip-hop fans. These performances attracted broad audiences, representing ages 11 to 77, non-Arab Americans, and people coming to New York City from Philadelphia, Washington D.C. and Connecticut.

The Lab also helped the Little Syria project learn how to self-produce a show and a film project. Before and after the performance, they conducted interactive cell-phone surveys that drew crowd members deeper into the experience, yielding more insights into the performance's impact on the audience, including possible actions they might take. They plan to incorporate this survey process into future performances. They also executed a Grow Progress online survey for 400 individuals using a minute-long video of the performance to test if it could move audiences on narratives of belonging.

The Little Syria Team Wanted to Learn:

- Does immersion in the story of the Little Syria neighborhood and its people lead to greater support for more open immigration policies?
- Does the story lead audiences to be more open to immigrants defining their own destiny rather than assimilating?
- Does the story lead audiences to feel more agency or be willing to take action in support of immigrants?

What We Learned:

- We learned that Islamophobia and racism are the very real baseline for many audiences, even those who attended this performance. Merely showing images of Black and brown immigrants can depress support for immigration and immigrants.

- However, a video of Omar's musical performance used in online surveys moved Democrats and self-described conservatives to be more open to embracing a future in which all could move more freely.

- Live audiences were incredibly enthusiastic about the Little Syria performance. The top emotional words they expressed included: "nostalgic", "happy" and "proud." They also overwhelmingly agreed with the statement: "Immigrants should be free to be who they are without restrictions. Being free to define their own destiny is the best thing for both immigrants and the communities they live in."

- Audience members expressed support for pro-Syrian immigrant actions. Almost all audience members expressed support for recategorizing Syrians in the census as either "Middle Eastern-North African", whatever they like, or in a category other than "white." Almost two-thirds said they would donate to a refugee resettlement agency.

Muslim Futures Project

The Muslim Futures Project brought together eight Muslim American writers, filmmakers, and artists with two expert advisors for a collaborative world-building experience. They wanted to transform monolithic perceptions of Muslim immigrants and their descendants. Participating artists co-created a multiverse of stories set in aspirational futures that will manifest as fiction, graphic novels, television, and films.

Nura of the Multiverse **written by Karim Ahmad, art by David N. Gordillo**

For participants, this writer's room was a space to generate scalable, artist-centered, values-aligned, research-supported stories for the marketplace, while avoiding the homogenizing pressures of the culture industries. The diverse stories they generated were rooted in the Butterfly Lab's deep narratives and constructed to move audiences toward seeing Muslim immigrants in their full humanity.

The Project tested these stories in two rounds of randomized controlled trials conducted with the Grow Progress online platform, with a total of almost 2,400 individuals from the U.S. general population to assess whether they moved audiences toward a pro-immigrant worldview. They asked whether these Muslim science fiction/fantasy stories might:

- Help to move people away from associating Islam with violence;

- Help people identify shared cultural values with Muslim communities and individuals and understand that what is good for Muslim communities in America is good for communities at large; and

- Help people understand the intersectionality of Muslim individuals and communities.

The first round reinforced the prevalence of Islamophobia, especially among those with low annual income or level of educational attainment. Stereotypes associating Muslim men with violence – especially young Muslim men – are distressingly stubborn, even among political liberals and moderates who might usually be considered allies of migrants and immigrants.

For a second round of testing, they tweaked some of the stories to better fit the testing format and offered different story variations. This testing revealed directions forward. Stories that featured older men and women as protagonists, highlighted the power of prayer, or centered personal empowerment and joy, found appeal with older, conservative segments. For young audiences who rejected those kinds of stories, ones that featured young male superheroes were popular.

What We Learned:

- Adding impact research tools to story design can provide intriguing creative parameters to artists.

- Translating complex short stories to the digital testing context may raise test design issues.

- We should not use research tools to attempt to create "the perfect story," but instead to inform artists about what makes stories compelling to specific audience segments.

- We also learned that because Islamophobic narratives are still so powerful in the mainstream, we need narrative plenitude — many more kinds of stories told by Muslim Americans — to move audiences. Certain stories may move certain audience segments but not others, requiring us to target different audiences with different stories. An approach that centers artists and a diversity of stories can work.

Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition

The Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC) used deep canvassing via door-knocking and phone-banking to increase support among conflicted audiences for refugee resettlement and immigrants more broadly. Their program targeted five counties in the state which voted for Trump at a rate of 45-70% and where immigrant populations have been growing.

TIRCC experienced difficulties in building a canvasser team, but still conducted nearly 400 conversations with Tennessee residents in under six weeks. Their team of ten included directly affected individuals (immigrants and children of immigrants) and allies. These results provided insights into best practices ahead of their plan to scale to more than 1000 conversations in 2023.

TIRCC sought to test two different kinds of scripts with door-to-door canvassing and phone banking: a policy-first script on refugee resettlement and a narrative-first script centering the notion of "the freedom to move," meant to reduce anti-immigrant bias. In the former, canvassers measured their success in moving people to support refugee resettlement. In the latter, canvassers asked the question: "Are you against, undecided, or in favor of the notion that the ability to move, whether between cities, states, or nations is a right that needs to be protected?"

Prior to testing the scripts, the accepted wisdom was that only a policy-focused script would be effective at moving audiences to support immigrants and immigration. But TIRCC found that both scripts showed audiences' notable movement toward pro-immigration and pro-immigrant views. Both scripts did better with Black and Latinx people, and women than with white people and men. Compared to the resettlement script, the freedom to move script was especially promising with Black people and men.

Both the policy resettlement and freedom to move scripts were effective in moving people on bias. But the "freedom to move" script was less effective in moving people on policy. More testing needs to be done to learn why, and what kinds of scripts may be most effective for different ends in different contexts. However, TIRCC's experience reveals that narrative-first scripts should absolutely be developed as a part of any deep canvassing organization's tactics. Although Tennessee is currently a red state with a hostile governor and legislature, TIRCC's deep canvassing demonstrated strong, measured progress in moving canvassees toward pro-immigrant positions.

Conclusion

WHAT WE HAVE PRESENTED HERE represents almost three years of intensive work at all scales of the movement, from the local to the national and global, across the breadth of the narrative ecosystem, and in all kinds of narrative work. All of this work points toward an increased interest in narrative, as well as a desire to build stronger narrative ecosystems and aligned narrative strategy in the movement.

The pro-immigrant movement must build both its narrative capacity and a more aligned narrative strategy to win a pro-immigrant majority. Building capacity should result in narrative plenitude, the expansion of stories that appeal to different and diverse audiences that together can establish new cultural norms in society. Building a more aligned strategy should result in moving these audiences together toward a destination – an enduring pro-immigrant worldview rooted in deep narratives that build the future we want.

In the past, movements have sometimes emphasized message discipline. But message discipline is different from narrative power-building. No one's worldview was ever built on a platform of policies. Worldviews are built on sets of values, deeply held feelings and beliefs, and social norms. The Butterfly Lab Narrative System allows individuals and organizations to align on these to build connections, discover the potential for collaboration, and to develop goals that connect near-term work to the mid-term and long-term. Here is where the possibility of a powerful narrative sector within the pro-immigrant movement begins. For these reasons, we leave with these ideas for building narrative strategy and narrative capacity in the movement:

- Invest in advancing shared narrative goals, research, curriculum, coaching, and technical assistance, not just at the national level, but especially among regional, state and local organizations.

- Create spaces for movement leaders, artists, and organizations to use dedicated resources and time to prioritize and sustain narrative strategy, continued learning, and collaboration internally and across the movement ecosystem.

- Develop a multi-front strategy that allows different narrative actors in the movement to target and move different audiences at the same time. Create structures that allow the learnings from these fronts to iteratively inform more narrative strategy-making.

- Create more opportunities for future-building across the movement to develop and align short-term time horizon thinking, planning, and executing with mid- and long-term thinking in order to build a diverse, balanced approach to narrative power-building.

- Organize funders to coordinate a strategy to target and organize local, state, regional, and group-specific funders with the aim of breaking down silos of advocacy and arts funding to advance immigrant narratives.

We know the present conditions we face are daunting. But we believe that what we wrote in our first report still stands: "We are called instead to forge a new consensus. We must move a majority of people to imagine and act to create a world that does not yet exist. In order to make this world a reality, we need to orient ourselves toward the world we want to win, and make this future tangible and irresistible to a majority."

We wrap up our work now with a strong belief: the pro-immigrant majority is ready for us to organize and activate. We believe that a better world is possible. It begins with us.

A FUTURE FOR ALL OF US
PART 2

BUTTERFLY LAB
for Immigrant Narrative Strategy

sára abdullah

Janelle Treibitz

Kana Hammon

Nayantara Sen

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Introduction

WELCOME STORYTELLERS, DREAM WEAVERS, AND COMMUNITY BUILDERS,

> **Cultural change precedes social change. Narrative drives policy. That is why we must be as strategic and rigorous in building narrative power as we are in building all other forms of power.**

This revised and updated toolkit, which was initially developed in the first phase of the Butterfly Lab for Immigrant Narrative Strategy, will help you get started in thinking about narrative, articulating your narrative strategy, and designing and implementing your narrative projects. By narrative project, we mean any activity that advances narrative goals, including messaging campaigns, social media campaigns, videos, art installations, street theater, deep canvassing, direct actions, mass mobilizations, and more. The tools here will allow you to analyze the narrative terrain, sharpen your narratives, identify and choose the most effective forms and platforms to win over audiences.

Narrative work is about meaning-making and transformation. Social movements have always been explicit about thinking and working to build power. We want to build and sustain power for narratives that enable us to make the world we want.

> ## Winning is about making our narratives the dominant narratives and then defending them.

Transforming people's worldviews and belief systems, and creating the sustainable cultural conditions for them to choose, behave and act differently is the deep and rigorous work of building narrative power for social justice.

Before you embark on your journey, you may want to read **our Butterfly Lab reports**. We elaborate on our theory, practice, learnings, and recommendations there. But you don't need to do that to get started. To make the best use of the toolkit, we recommend first grounding yourself in our **Key Definitions.**

The **Narrative Design Star** will orient you to the process of aligning your narrative goals, impacts, audiences and forms, so that you can create nuanced and strategic projects that move your audiences towards pro-immigrant narratives. This toolkit also includes a set of worksheets to support your ideation and design, and a comprehensive step-by-step **Narrative Project Design Guide**. We then introduce you to our concepts of the **Narrative System** and **Narrative Ecosystem** to help you think about how you can collaborate with others to move your narrative work over time, across audiences, and at different scales through strategic alignment. In the second and last phase of the Lab, our work focused on building alignment within our movement, and so you will find additional tools that can be used to strengthen your strategy with the **Design Star Strategy Alignment Worksheet**, help you think about predicting and measuring your impact with the **Narrative Hypothesis Worksheet,** and help you build narrative alignment within your work and within the larger movement ecosystem in the worksheet.

NOW LET'S GET STARTED!

Our Terms and Definitions

LANGUAGE IS ALIVE — and as it transforms and shifts in response to emerging cultural conditions, it also helps us create new meaning and new connections. At the time of this publication, there are multiple organizations, networks, and leaders that are helping to define the field, practices, and frameworks of narrative and cultural strategy. There are several definitions and interpretations of narrative and cultural strategy; many of them are complementary, even though parts of our field use different words to describe similar or interrelated concepts. In the Butterfly Lab, we have leaned heavily on thought leadership and definitional work that came before us, and from collaborators and guides in the field. We define the following terms, concepts, and practices this way:

MESSAGE
Hashtags, slogans, ideas, taglines that serve as reminders of what we think and how we might choose to act. They are most often used in the context of campaigns and strategic communications. The best of them become narratives.

STORY
Stories have discrete elements and building blocks such as characters, setting, conflict and action that unfold through a plot, over an arc. Human brains are wired to interpret and create meaning through stories, so stories are the basic unit of change.

NARRATIVE
An array of related and connected stories and messages on a particular subject, issue, or problem. They suggest causes, problems and solutions. We interpret stories and messages through them. Narratives evoke emotion, offer analysis, and suggest action; they tell us how we should feel, think, and act. Narrative is the level at which society moves.

DEEP NARRATIVE
Narratives, in turn, are held together by underlying frameworks and values we call "deep narratives." These deep narratives constitute worldviews, the ways in which people understand their world.

NARRATIVE STRATEGY
Narrative strategy is the praxis of thinking and using stories, messages, and narratives in a purposeful way to move people toward the narratives, deep narratives, and worldviews we want to advance.

CULTURAL STRATEGY
We like the definition used by the Center for Cultural Power — *"Cultural Strategy is a practice that leverages the catalytic and emotional power of culture and the arts to shift attitudes, behaviors, resources, narratives and power."*

NARRATIVE SYSTEM

We define a *narrative system* as a set of deep narratives that together describe the worldview we want to activate at a majority level. A narrative system provides a "destination" to ground narrative projects ranging from rapid-response and policy campaigns to cultural strategies and longer-term narrative work. It sets our values, helps us to find alignment and consensus across projects and timelines, and allows us to connect our work with other social movements.

NARRATIVE ECOSYSTEM

We define a *narrative ecosystem* as a network of connected individuals and organizations that can share knowledge, expertise, skills, ideas, capacities, and work to advance a narrative system across a diversity of fronts along different timelines.

CORE AUDIENCE

A core audience is an audience whom we consider to be fundamentally in agreement with us already. Usually, our goal is to shore up and activate our core audiences to act in the ways that we need, and to lead others to do the same.

STRETCH AUDIENCE

A stretch audience is an audience whom we need to have on our side to win. Our goal is to make our stretch audiences into our core audience. We will often need to flex new muscles to understand, reach, and convert them.

PRIMARY AUDIENCE

This is what we call an audience who is the direct target of a narrative project. The project is specifically designed to engage, activate, and/or persuade them.

SECONDARY AUDIENCE

This is what we call an audience who is not the primary target of a project, but who might encounter it, and with whom there is some intention to engage.

OPPOSITION AUDIENCE

This is what we call an audience who we anticipate will resist or challenge a project or action. It is important to factor in the opposition's reactions, which could prove strategically advantageous.

A FEW RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS AND RESOURCES

» Narrative Initiative's Glossary of Terms in Toward New Gravity
» Narrative Initiative's Resource Library, including webinars, worksheets, and case studies
» Pop Culture Collaborative's Key Definitions — Pop Culture for Social Change

Tools for Narrative Project Design

IN THIS SECTION OF THE TOOLKIT, we offer you a set of tools developed through the Butterfly Lab to guide you through the narrative design process.

If you can, we recommend you build in a process to test your work in a smaller prototype form. A prototype is simply a small test to see which parts of your project work. Narrative projects rarely achieve their desired reach, impact and activation in their first attempts. The value of narrative prototyping lies in being able to test new ideas quickly in a short amount of time. In the pro-immigrant movement, stakes often feel urgent and high, and risk is highly discouraged. But in a narrative design process, "failure" is as great a teacher as "success."

Use these tools to design and implement narrative projects, pausing and returning to the drawing board to iterate, re-design, test, and adjust. Projects may need to be tweaked a few times before you can hit the four corners of the Narrative Design Star and land on the clearest, testable articulation. Adjusting your design based on your audience's reactions and impacts (versus your anticipated impacts) can inspire changes of all kinds. Thoughtful prototyping requires your team to be clear, rigorous, focused, and aspirational in design, while also holding assumptions lightly and being open to learning and change.

Here you will find:

1. The **Narrative Design Star** to act as your design compass — a framework with correlated worksheets to make sure you have the most key elements of narrative design in place.
   a. The **Narrative Pyramid Worksheet** to help you shape, refine, and align your narrative strategy.
   b. The **Audience Worksheet** to help you get as concrete and specific as possible about your audiences.
   c. The **Goals Worksheet** to help you clarify both your narrative and project goals.
   d. The **Form Worksheet** to help you brainstorm what form your narrative project will take.
   e. **Design Star Strategy Alignment Worksheet** to help you ensure your design elements are aligned and in service of your goals

2. An introduction to **Narrative Hypothesis & Impact Measurement**
   a. The **Narrative Hypothesis Worksheet** to help you make informed predictions about how and why your narrative project will impact an audience.

3. The **Step-by-Step Narrative Project Design Guide** to bring all your design elements together, engage a last round of revisions and iterations, and finalize your project details.

4. **An Introduction to Narrative System and Ecosystem** to think strategically about possible collaborations and help you ground your work in shared deep narratives for the pro-immigrant movement.
   a. **Narrative System Worksheet** to help you begin to identify the deep narratives that can form the basis of your own narrative system.

Narrative Design Star

OUR DESIGN STAR ILLUSTRATES THE KEY ELEMENTS YOU NEED for a strategic narrative project. You can start a design process from any point on the star. The starting point will guide the logic for making choices around the other points. For instance, if you start by knowing what audience you want to engage, then that choice will naturally lead you to choose a narrative, goals, and a project form that have the potential to reach and resonate with that audience.

We invite you to use this star as a compass for your design process. Choose where to start based on what makes the most sense for your priorities and context. Then use our worksheets to help you develop and iterate each point of the star.

We recommend gathering your team and going through this design process together. Once you have made your way through all of the Design Star worksheets, you'll have the essential elements you need for an effective narrative project. The final **Step-by-Step Narrative Project Design Guide** will help you bring it all home and turn your project design into a plan.

DESIGN STEP ONE

Use the Design Star and linked worksheets to clarify your key design elements.

DESIGN STEP TWO

Use the Narrative Hypothesis Worksheet to make informed predictions about the impact your project will have on your audiences and to think about how you might measure success.

DESIGN STEP THREE

Use the Step-by-Step Narrative Project Design Guide to bring all your design elements together, finalize your design decisions, and map out the concrete details.

Narrative Pyramid Worksheet

Narrative Strategy Creates Alignment

Deep Narrative
↓
Narrative
↓
Story
↓
Message

THE NARRATIVE PYRAMID IS A TOOL to understand how messages, stories, narratives, and deep narratives work, and together produce and reinforce values, attitudes, emotions, and actions around a particular issue or problem. It helps us to see how the opposition stacks its message, stories, narratives, and deep narratives, and how we need to construct our own narrative pyramids to advance pro-immigrant narratives.

Aligning your messages, stories, and narratives with the selected deep narratives is important for moving people toward the world we want to make. For example, we want to avoid launching short-term messaging campaigns that may reinforce harmful narratives. *A robust narrative strategy links, aligns, and reinforces all four parts of the Narrative Strategy Pyramid from deep narratives down through messages.*

The following worksheet is designed to help you — along with your team and collaborators — to analyze the narrative terrain and identify gaps and opportunities for narrative strategy and alignment in your work.

STEP 1: FILL OUT THE NARRATIVE PYRAMID WORKSHEET

Complete the narrative pyramid worksheet. We recommend that you work through both sides of the pyramid tool to map your desired narrative against the opposition narrative. Also, you may want to reference our Narrative System to see if any of the deep narratives developed by movement leaders in the Butterfly Lab could be useful to you. We've provided a sample worksheet based on the "Love is Love" narrative from the Marriage Equality movement, in case that is helpful.

STEP 2: CHECK YOUR NARRATIVE ALIGNMENT

After you've filled out the Narrative Pyramid, use the guiding questions below to return to your side of the Pyramid and recheck each level in terms of alignment.

❑ Do your deep narratives, narratives, stories, and messages all align with the vision of the world you are trying to build? If not, how can you make your side of the Pyramid describe more of the future that you want?

❑ Might any part of your stories, messages, or narratives inadvertently reinforce harmful dominant narratives about immigrants, migrants, or refugees? If so, what adjustments can you make to eliminate or subvert those harmful narratives?

SAMPLE NARRATIVE PYRAMID

Marriage Equality Narrative

OPPOSITION	OURS
DEEP NARRATIVES *The underlying frameworks and values that form a worldview.* Tradition Stability Scarcity	**DEEP NARRATIVES** *The underlying frameworks and values that form a worldview.* Equality Inclusion Love
NARRATIVES *An array of related stories and messages that together evoke emotion, offer analysis, and suggest action.* Marriage is a lifetime individual commitment between a man and a woman.	**NARRATIVES** *An array of related stories and messages that together evoke emotion, offer analysis, and suggest action.* Love is love Marriage equality
STORIES *Stories have characters and a story arc. They create meaning and are the basic unit of change.* Stories of love and commitment between a man and a woman	**STORIES** *Stories have characters and a story arc. They create meaning and are the basic unit of change.* Inclusive stories of love and commitment Stories of people supporting their LGBTQ friends' and family's desire for marriage
MESSAGES *Hashtags, slogans, ideas, taglines that remind us of what we think and how we might choose to act.* Marriage is between man and wife Rights aren't just handed out	**MESSAGES** *Hashtags, slogans, ideas, taglines that remind us of what we think and how we might choose to act.* Love is love

NARRATIVE PYRAMID WORKSHEET

OPPOSITION	OURS
DEEP NARRATIVES *The underlying frameworks and values that form a worldview.*	**DEEP NARRATIVES** *The underlying frameworks and values that form a worldview.*
NARRATIVES *An array of related stories and messages that together evoke emotion, offer analysis, and suggest action.*	**NARRATIVES** *An array of related stories and messages that together evoke emotion, offer analysis, and suggest action.*
STORIES *Stories have characters and a story arc. They create meaning and are the basic unit of change.*	**STORIES** *Stories have characters and a story arc. They create meaning and are the basic unit of change.*
MESSAGES *Hashtags, slogans, ideas, taglines that remind us of what we think and how we might choose to act.*	**MESSAGES** *Hashtags, slogans, ideas, taglines that remind us of what we think and how we might choose to act.*

Audience Worksheet

REVISED February 20, 2023

If we are ultimately trying to build a pro-immigrant majority in this country, we need to be able to reach, engage, and move a large number of people. This will involve two goals: to shore up and activate our core audiences, and to reach and persuade stretch audiences.

Core audiences are audiences whom we consider to be fundamentally in agreement with us already. **Stretch audiences** are those who are not yet with us, but could be with some effort and intervention. Both stretch and core audiences exist amongst liberals, conservatives, independents and everyone in between. Every organization will have their own core and stretch audiences that they define based on the goals of their campaign, initiative, or strategy.

Among possible core and stretch audiences, you'll find a variety of people with different core values, cultural consumption habits, and worldviews. Different narratives, stories, and messengers will land differently with these different audience segments.

When you get to the point of designing a narrative project, you need to be very specific about who you are designing it for. This is your **primary audience**, the audience whom you most want to reach and move. You may also think about your **secondary audience**, the audience who might encounter your project and who you have some intention to engage, but who is not your primary target. You may also need to take into account your **opposition audience**, an audience who will resist or challenge your project. You may not target them directly, but it will be important and sometimes strategic to anticipate their reactions.

Understanding the audience your project is targeting (your **primary audience**) is one of the most important elements to be able to achieve narrative success. This worksheet will help you identify your audience(s), outline their characteristics, and figure out what narratives and content might resonate with them.

Identifying Your Audience

IDENTIFYING YOUR AUDIENCE

PRIMARY AUDIENCE

SECONDARY AUDIENCE

OPPOSITION
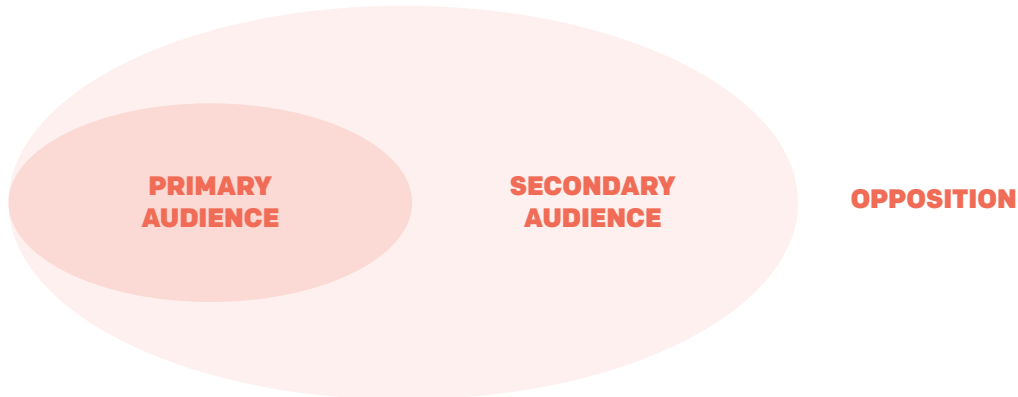
1 **Who do you want to reach with your narrative project?**

	Describe your audiences:
Primary Audience *This is the audience you are directly targeting with your project.*	
Secondary Audience *This is an audience who might encounter your project, and whom you have some intention to engage, but who is not your primary target.*	
Opposition *This is an audience who will resist or challenge your project. You will likely not target them directly, but it will be important to anticipate their reactions.*	

2 **Why focus on this particular primary and secondary audience? What are the strategic benefits of reaching these audiences?**

3   What do your audiences care about?

	CORE VALUES	WHAT MOTIVATES THEM	WHO OR WHAT INFLUENCES THEM?
Primary Audience			
Secondary Audience			
Opposition			

4   Where are they? Where will you reach them?

	Where do they spend time? (be specific about their places of engagement)	What do they do for fun/learning/ improvement/ spiritual experiences?	What media/art/ culture/ influencers do they engage?
Primary Audience			
Secondary Audience			

5   What challenges do you foresee in reaching these audiences?

6   **How might your audiences receive and react to your selected narrative?**

	What about your narrative would resonate with them?	What confusion or disconnection might they experience? What might they not understand?	What criticisms might they have? (e.g. if dominant narrative is winning)
Primary Audience			
Secondary Audience			
Opposition			

7   **How might your opposition react to your narrative?**

8   **How might your opposition's reaction to your narrative strategy help build your audience? How might you create narrative on-ramps or conditions to favorably activate your secondary audiences ?** (We're playing narrative chess here — anticipate the reaction to the reaction.)

Goals Worksheet

THIS WORKSHEET HELPS YOU CLARIFY AND DISTINGUISH between your narrative and project impact goals.

For example, if you are trying to pass a progressive border policy and you want to challenge the "lawless border" narrative in your project, then your project impact goal might be "to compel lawmakers to support our policy vision and pass our proposed bill", while your narrative goal might be "to advance a 'safety is strong communities' narrative with stories of vibrant, cross-border community-building. In some cases, such as where the project impact goal is meant solely to have a narrative impact, both goals may be the same."

Discuss with your team the goals you have for your project and what you're hoping your project will accomplish for your narrative.

1   **What is your project impact goal? What impact do you want your project to have on your primary audiences? On your issue?**

2   **What is your narrative goal for this project? Are you trying to reframe or challenge your opposition's narrative? Build support for your own? What is the narrative impact you want to have on your primary audiences?**

Form Worksheet

THIS WORKSHEET WILL HELP YOU GENERATE IDEAS for what form your project will take. Developing the shape of a narrative project is part strategy, part creativity. We will provide some exploratory questions below to help you reflect on both.

Almost anything can serve as a vehicle to advance a narrative. Your project could take the form of a photography exhibit or YouTube video, a mixtape or a Tik Tok challenge, a science fiction series or a holiday-themed event. Or it could take the form of more traditional movement tactics such as direct actions, lobbying days, rallies, or marches.

Whatever form you choose, we invite you to use this worksheet to lean into your own creativity and have some fun brainstorming with your team.

BRAINSTORMING QUESTIONS

Feel free to explore any question in any order.

✳ What do you know about your audience? What do they like to do? Who influences them? What entertainment and media platforms are they on? What type of content do they typically like to experience or consume? What does this knowledge suggest about which forms would be likely to reach and resonate with them?

✳ If you already know your narrative, what would it look like to embody it? What symbols or models might boldly illustrate your narrative?

> **Example:** To change the dominant narrative about people with criminal records, the People's Paper Co-op worked with returning citizens to make recycled paper out of their old criminal records, put their photos on it, and write a caption describing what people don't see about them when they look at their criminal records. They created murals with the resulting papers and used them as an advocacy tool.

❊ What does your desired future look and feel like? What values are central to the society you are trying to build? What are the shared holidays, rituals, and celebrations that grow from those values? How would your society's institutions function differently than they do now? Is there anything from that future that you could "bring back" and manifest now?

> **Example:** To build power for a narrative opposing a $19 billion bank bailout, a group of Austrian architecture students created a scale model of a sustainable city that could be built for the same price tag as the bailout. They displayed the model in a public square and gave tours of the city to audiences.

❊ Are any of your opposition's narratives successful enough that it's worth challenging them? Can you think of ways to satirize them? Can you think of ways to illuminate the harmful underlying deep narratives that drive the opposition's narratives? Are there specific media platforms, channels, or in-person activations that are more likely to be effective in helping audiences divest from opposition narratives?

> **Example:** The Greater than Fear campaign in Minnesota invited social media audiences to put photos of their dogs into a digital frame that made their dogs look like "dog-whistle-fighting" superheroes. People would then post the photos on social media to call out racist dog whistles from politicians.

❊ Are there any significant symbols, locations, or dates that would help you illustrate the stories you want to highlight?

> **Example:** Activist Bree Newsome scaled a 30-foot pole to take down the Confederate battle flag that was displayed on the grounds of the South Carolina State House in order to draw attention to institutionalized white supremacy symbolized by the flag at the seat of power.

❊ What creative assets do you have access to? Do you know a local band? Are you a poet? Does your organization have a relationship with an artist? List out all the creative assets that come to mind. Knowing that you have those relationships, can you imagine a way to collaborate and integrate any of those assets into your project?

❊ What kinds of activities and connections bring you joy? Can you think of project ideas that build on what you would have fun doing?

Design Star Strategy Alignment Worksheet

REVISED February 20, 2023

NARRATIVE DESIGN IS AN ITERATIVE PROCESS, and it's important to refine your design elements until all are working in sync and are in service of your goals. Once you have gone through your design star worksheets and established your deep narrative, narrative, goals, audience, and form, you can use this worksheet to check each element of your project for alignment.

Fill out the worksheet on page 71 to see all of your design elements together. Below are questions you can then use to make sure that your project is narratively strategic. You should discuss and answer these questions collaboratively with your team involved in the co-design and implementation of your narrative project.

1   Are your Design Star points aligned?

- Does your **narrative** grow naturally out of your **deep narrative**?
- Does your **narrative goal** advance your **narrative**?
- Does your **project goal** describe the impact that you want your project **form** to have?
- Does your project **form** make sense for who your **audience** is and offer an opportunity to advance your **narrative**?

2   Will your project actually reach your audience? If you're not sure, what can you adjust to make sure that you do reach your audience?

3   Why do you believe your project will work on your audiences? What do you know about your audiences and what are your assumptions that lead you to believe your project will have the intended impact?

4 **Put yourself in your audience's shoes as they encounter/experience your project. Is your narrative clear to them — without having to explain or translate it? If you're not sure, what can you adjust to make sure your narrative is understood?**

5 **How might you measure that your project reached and impacted your audiences and achieved its goals?**

DESIGN STAR WORKSHEET: EXAMPLE

This example has been excerpted from the Muslim Futures Project's Design Star, completed for the Chrysalis Lab

YOUR DEEP NARRATIVE	YOUR NARRATIVE
Abundance Belonging Mutuality/Reciprocity	Intersectional Muslim communities are also American communities / What is good for Muslims is good for all of us

YOUR AUDIENCE	YOUR GOALS
Culturally-literate liberal and moderate folks of all races who are susceptible to Islamophobic narratives.	**NARRATIVE GOAL(S):** 1. Advance the view of Muslim communities as American communities. What is good for Muslims is good for all of us. 2. Dismantle the war on terror framing. **PROJECT GOAL(S):** Create stories that manifest aspirational Muslim futures in the U.S.

YOUR FORM

Part 1: Conduct a writers' room utilizing our unique collaborative world-building practice and develop story ideas based on values-driven aspirational Muslim futures.

Part 2: Publish a prose fiction anthology and graphic novel anthology with stories developed from the writers' room.

Part 3: Support writers to continue translating Muslim Futures stories into short films, features, and series pitches.

DESIGN STAR WORKSHEET

Use this worksheet to pull all of your narrative design elements together. This can provide a transparent, strategic view for your design process. Use the Design Star Strategy Check worksheet on the following page to check for alignment.

YOUR DEEP NARRATIVE	YOUR NARRATIVE

YOUR AUDIENCE	YOUR GOALS
	NARRATIVE GOAL(S): **PROJECT GOAL(S):**

YOUR FORM

Narrative Hypothesis & Impact Measurement

ANYONE DESIGNING A NARRATIVE PROJECT OR CAMPAIGN makes informed predictions about how and why they will impact an audience. This prediction is called **a hypothesis**. In order to effectively measure your impact, it is essential to define your hypothesis. This also allows you to take a step back and look at the underlying assumptions that form the spine of your narrative strategy.

> A hypothesis is your **rationale for why** your project is the *solution to the problem* you're trying to solve and a **prediction for how** your solution will work in the real world.

We have developed the following prompts that, once answered, form your narrative hypothesis:

* ✳ **Our primary audience believes/does:** The problem you're solving for (i.e. problematic attitude, belief, behavior, or narrative)

* ✳ **...because:** Narratives, experiences, values, influences, or mindsets

* ✳ **Therefore, we believe the solution is to:** Broadly, what you believe needs to be done in the world or with your audiences that solves the problem (Note: your narrative goal should grow from this anticipated solution)

* ✳ **We think that if we:** What you're doing to advance toward that solution (aka your project form)

* ✳ **...then our audience will:** Predict the impact that your project will have on your audience: attitude shift, behavior change, etc (aka your project goal)

To find out whether or not your campaign or project has its intended impact, you can test whether your hypothesis was correct. Did your audience respond the way you thought they would? And does their response, whether or not it was as predicted, move you closer to the solution? When working from a hypothesis, even failure can lead to powerful learnings because it builds your understanding of what didn't work and why, and, based on that, what you might try next.

We also recommend you think about what your indicators of success might be. Success indicators can serve as milestones or checkpoints to help you know if you're on the right track. They could include a preferred answer on a content test survey; an observed reaction in an art exhibit, or an idea trending on social media or in the news. If you aren't meeting your success indicators, it may be time to revisit your hypothesis or reassess your approach. You can include success indicators in your hypothesis process by adding this prompt:

> ✳ **We will know our work is having its intended impact when we observe:**
> Tangible indicators of success that you can measure; what reactions, responses, behaviors or actions you might observe from your primary audiences that will tell you that you're on the right track

There are many ways to test how your narratives impact audiences. If you want to learn more, we recommend Erin Potts' *Current Evaluation and Measurement Techniques for Cultural Strategy.*

NARRATIVE HYPOTHESIS WORKSHEET: EXAMPLE

This example has been excerpted from Intelligent Mischief's Design Star, completed for the Chrysalis Lab

OUR PRIMARY AUDIENCE IS:
Young African Americans

OUR PRIMARY AUDIENCE BELIEVES/DOES:	BECAUSE:
Young African Americans see Black immigrants as competition for resources. Worries over reparations make them anti-immigrant. They feel that people are taking away something that belongs to them.	Their scarcity mindset and belief in a hierarchical system — they don't want to be at the bottom of it. Their fear due to historical erasure of Black Americans.Their awareness of a lack of sovereignty, lack of a homeland. "Home is here, but here's not really home". Feeling of being unmoored, not being able to claim a place of safety or true belonging.

THEREFORE WE BELIEVE THE SOLUTION IS TO:
Strengthen or re-ignite a Pan-African narrative that builds deep narratives of interdependence, belonging, and abundance, which in turn serve as proxies of other assumptions beyond hierarchy like shared power, etc. Attaching this to positive affect (i.e. Black euphoria/afro-euphoria, Black joy, collectivity, happy feelings) creates the desire for further manifestations of this narrative in behavior and experience-seeking.

FOR OUR PART, WE THINK THAT IF WE:	THEN OUR AUDIENCE WILL:
Build an immersive space that manifests a Pan-African narrative through multiple installations and experiences, each of which generates affects like Black joy…	…feel connected to a Pan-African identity, learn and create community with others, and develop into a base of Black folks who will be in solidarity with immigrants and other movements.

WE WILL KNOW OUR WORK IS HAVING ITS INTENDED IMPACT WHEN WE OBSERVE:
• People go back to immersive space multiple times • People are posting pro-Pan African and pro-immigrant messages on Tik Tok, Instagram • People are pro-immigrant oriented in other parties, festivals (i.e. Wakanda parties, fan fiction, etc)

NARRATIVE HYPOTHESIS WORKSHEET

OUR PRIMARY AUDIENCE IS:	
OUR PRIMARY AUDIENCE BELIEVES/DOES:	**BECAUSE:**
The problem you're solving for (i.e. problematic attitude, belief, behavior, or narrative)	*Narratives, experiences, values, influences, or mindsets.*

THEREFORE WE BELIEVE THE SOLUTION IS TO:

Broadly what you believe needs to be done in the world or with your audiences that solves the problem (Note: your narrative goal should grow from this anticipated solution)

FOR OUR PART, WE THINK THAT IF WE:	THEN OUR AUDIENCE WILL:
What you're doing to advance toward that solution (aka. your project form)	*Predict the impact on your audience: attitude shift, behavior change, etc (aka. your project goal)*

WE WILL KNOW OUR WORK IS HAVING ITS INTENDED IMPACT WHEN WE OBSERVE:

Tangible indicators of success that you can measure; what reactions, responses, behaviors or actions you might observe from your primary audiences that will tell you that you're on the right track.

Step-by-Step Narrative Project Design Guide

REVISED February 20, 2023

THE STEP-BY-STEP NARRATIVE PROJECT DESIGN GUIDE is a multi-part worksheet to help you bring all of your project design elements together after you've completed the Narrative Pyramid, Audience, Goals, and Form Worksheets. Take the time with the previous tools so that by the time you sit down to develop your project timeline and budget, and advance into the more meticulous work-planning, your team feels confident and grounded in your project idea.

In this guide, questions will prompt you to plug in the results of your work from the Narrative Design Star worksheets. You will have a chance to dig a little deeper into your audience's experience, and then you'll move into project planning details.

LET'S GET STARTED!

Table of Contents	

YOUR NARRATIVES

Plug in the results of your Narrative Pyramid Worksheet here:

a Your Selected Narrative:

_____

b The Narrative(s) you are challenging (if applicable):

_____

c The Deep Narrative you are advancing:

_____

YOUR NARRATIVE & PROJECT IMPACT GOALS

Plug in the results of your Goals Worksheet here:

a Your project impact goal for this project:

_____

_____

_____

b Your narrative goal for this project:

_____

_____

_____

YOUR SELECTED AUDIENCE

PRIMARY AUDIENCE   SECONDARY AUDIENCE   OPPOSITION
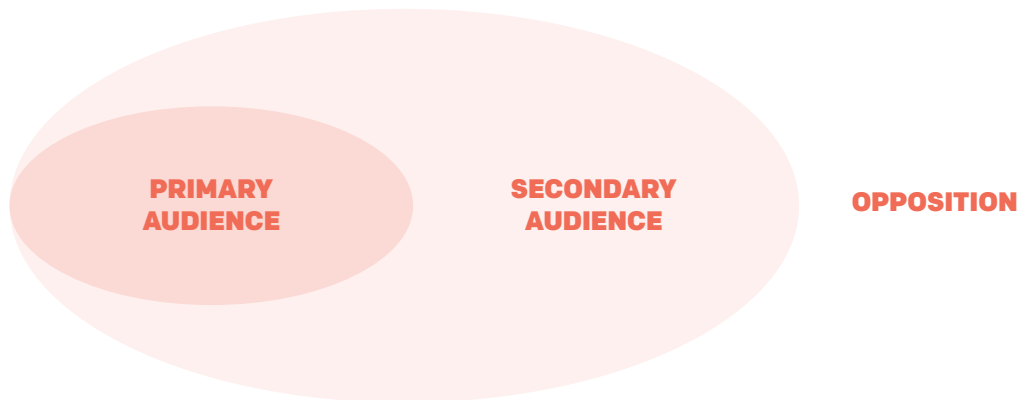
Plug in the results of your Audience Worksheet here:

	Describe your audiences:
Primary Audience *This is the audience you are directly targeting with your project.*	
Secondary Audience *This is an audience who might encounter your project, and whom you have some intention to engage, but who is not your primary target.*	
Opposition *This is an audience who will resist or challenge your project. You will likely not target them directly, but it will be important to anticipate their reactions.*	

Take some time to reflect on your primary and secondary audiences and answer these questions.

a Your project will need to directly reach your primary audience. Do you have what you need to directly reach your primary audience? How and where will you reach them? How and where will you reach your secondary audience?

b What is your hypothesis that explains why you believe your project will work on your audiences? What do you know about your audiences and what are your assumptions that lead you to believe your project will have the intended impact?

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND FORM

a In a few short sentences, describe your narrative project idea here in a logline. *Example: (short description + audience + narrative + deep narrative) This video series for Instagram targets persuadable, non-immigrant millennials of color who have participated in Black Lives Matter protests through a variety of short, easily accessible stories. Our narrative is: just immigration is central to a racial justice agenda. We intend to advance deep narratives of mutuality and community—that we all belong to each other and that we need to look out for each other.*

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

b Where will your project be implemented? Name your platform or venue. Use the final decisions from the Form Worksheet in the Design Star here.

_____

_____

c What will your target audience experience when encountering your project? Please be as descriptive here as possible, for instance: What will an audience member see or hear? What setting will they be in? What emotions are you hoping they will feel?

_____

_____

_____

d How will your project move your audience? How may it help put your audience in their "stretch zone"?

_____

_____

PROJECT DESIGN TIMELINE

In this section, lay out the activities and steps involved in the design, implementation, and testing of your project. List dates where applicable.

Make sure in your activities you are documenting when you will be doing activities for the following:

- Project Design
- Project Implementation
- Project Testing

PROJECT PHASE	YOUR PROJECT ACTIVITIES	MONTH OF IMPLEMENTATION	STATUS AND NOTES (*use this column to track your own progress)
Design and Pre-Testing			
Project Implementation and Testing			
Results and Learning			

PROJECT COLLABORATORS AND IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

Use the grid below to list names of people and organizations who will be directly responsible for the success of your project, and who will help you design, implement and evaluate it.

Who will you collaborate with in order to make your project happen? Besides yourself, who will help implement your idea and evaluate the results?

Process	Names of Collaborators and Implementers	Engaged by When?
Project Design		
Implementing Your Project		
Evaluating Results/ Reactions to your project		

While completing this section, you may also want to look at our Introduction to Narrative System and Narrative Ecosystem to spark more thinking about the process of collaboration.

PROJECT BUDGET

Use this template below to share your project budget for your project design, implementation, and testing.

Activity and Expense Description	Projected Expense
Total Project Budget Required	
Current Amount Fundraised	

An Introduction to the Narrative System and the Narrative Ecosystem

BECAUSE WE EACH HAVE A PART TO PLAY IN WINNING THE CULTURE, and because a multiplicity of narratives and approaches are necessary to ensure a thriving world for all, we introduce the frameworks of a narrative system and a narrative ecosystem.

People are moved and activated in different ways, along different timelines, and never just within the context of legislative, electoral, or policy campaigns alone. We have a better chance of building narrative power if we work with each other on different fronts and timelines to move different audiences in the same direction. As a movement, we should aspire to reach people all the time.

As you design your project, use the narrative system framework to help you choose the deep narratives with which your project will align. Use the narrative ecosystem framework to help you think about how your project relates to others' work to collectively move people towards our worldview.

NARRATIVE SYSTEM

We define a **narrative system** as a set of deep narratives that together describe the worldview we want to activate at a majority level. A narrative system provides a "destination" to ground narrative projects ranging from rapid-response and policy campaigns to cultural strategies and longer-term narrative work. It sets our values, helps us to find alignment and consensus across projects and timelines, and allows us to connect our work with other social movements.

Narrative System for our FUTURE

Interdependence
We recognize our interdependence with each other and with all life. We recognize that our fate is interconnected with each other's, and so we practice mutuality.

Safety
We collaborate as communities to ensure collective wellbeing and peace with justice. We build these solutions in community and use equity as our guiding principle, seeking to repair the harm against those most impacted.

Abundance
We recognize that there is enough for all if we live in alignment and the right relationship with the world around us, practicing love, care, community, and regeneration. When we center mindsets of sufficiency and generosity, resources can flourish into abundance. We call people toward an abundance of imagination, to make a leap with us toward our shared future.

Dignity
We believe in the inherent value and dignity of all life that exists. All should be able to exist and express their pride in being, practicing and transmitting their identities, such as their cultures, languages, and spiritual beliefs, as long as they do not harm or debase the dignity of others.

Belonging
We see each other, welcome each other, and call each other into community. We recognize and respect the diversity of our peoples and communities, acknowledging differences as invigorating and powerful assets that push us toward transformation. We see each other's joys and struggles with clear eyes, and care for each other as if our own. We recognize the ways that systems have oppressed and harmed people differently and make equity our central practice.

Freedom to Thrive
We believe all beings should thrive and that communities and cultures should have equal agency to make decisions about their lives, relationships, communities, and futures. In balance and alignment with our world, we should be able to pursue our dreams, engage in quality and fulfilling work, and live with joy, dignity, and love, regardless of race, national origin, gender identity, class, caste, religion, and ability.

The Butterfly Lab cohort developed a narrative system to challenge the status quo. This system is anchored in six deep narratives: **Interdependence, Abundance, Belonging, Safety, Freedom to Thrive**, **and Dignity** to inform the narrative strategy work our movements need now. After reading them, ask:

- What one or two deep narratives are most resonant with the work that you are currently doing?
- Which deep narratives would require that you stretch your practices and develop new stories?
- What aligned relationships might you build with partners, collaborators, and/or allies to extend the impact of your collective work?
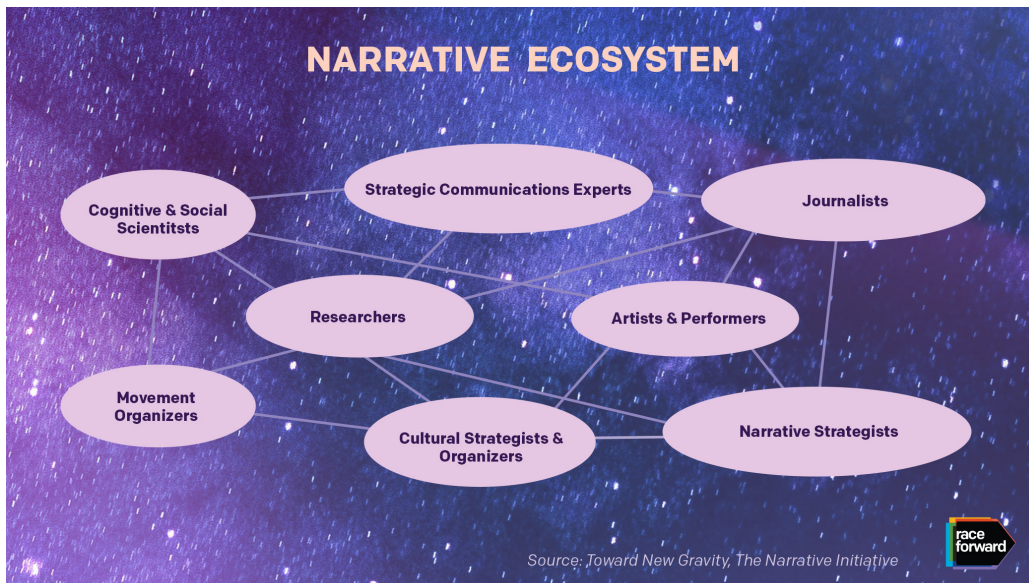
Narrative Ecosystem

OUR MOVEMENT HAS AN ABUNDANCE OF SKILLS, CAPACITIES, AND IDEAS.
Building bridges that facilitate the easeful sharing of visions, strategies, and resources is vital in our movements.

We define a narrative ecosystem as a network of connected individuals and organizations that can share knowledge, expertise, skills, ideas, capacities, and work to advance a narrative system across a diversity of fronts along different timelines.

The framework of a **narrative ecosystem** helps us imagine how we might be able to align ourselves with each other and work together in rapid-response and campaign timelines as well as longer timelines simultaneously.

NARRATIVE ECOSYSTEM

Cognitive & Social Scientitsts

Strategic Communications Experts

Journalists

Researchers

Artists & Performers

Movement Organizers

Cultural Strategists & Organizers

Narrative Strategists

Source: Toward New Gravity, The Narrative Initiative

To develop an ecosystem that prioritizes collaboration, relationality, and power-sharing, start by identifying your own role within it. The following are introductory prompts to which we encourage you to return at each step of your narrative design process. They can help you stay centered while thinking about how to forge stronger relationships.

⁂   **Who are you?** Think expansively and acknowledge how you arrived at this present moment. Who helped you? What has inspired and shaped you?

✳ **Who are your people?** There is a Spanish proverb that goes, "Tell me who you walk with and I will tell you who you are." Consider all of your human and other than human relatives. What are the places, peoples, communities, geographies, and experiences to which you feel connected?

✳ **Where are you going?** What goals are you working toward—personally, culturally, and beyond? What vision of the world motivates you? What do you need to learn and what capacities do you still need to build?

✳ **With whom will you build relationships?** Whose work and goals are complementary to yours? Who might extend your capacities or teach you new capacities? What aligned relationships might you build with partners, collaborators, and/or allies to extend the impact of your collective work?

The Social Change Ecosystem Map by Deepa Iyer at Building Movement Project is a useful tool for further identifying the texture of particular roles you might hold in building cultural and narrative power.

# Narrative System Worksheet

REVISED February 20, 2023

A NARRATIVE SYSTEM IS A SET OF DEEP NARRATIVES that together describe the worldview we want to activate at a majority level. It is the aggregate worldview that is generated through all of our deep narratives working in synergy and synchronization with each other. A narrative system provides a "destination" for our work. It sets our values, helps us to find alignment and consensus across projects and timelines, and allows us to connect our work with other social movements. The narrative system is a framework that can provide greater alignment in your field.

This worksheet will help you begin to identify the deep narratives that can form the basis of your own narrative system. We recommend doing this exercise with key stakeholders, whether in your organizations or in your communities, as a Narrative System sets the direction for your narrative strategy work into the future.

As you practice using this worksheet, consider pairing it with the narrative pyramid tool. All of your campaigns and projects should align from top to bottom on narrative pyramids. Your messaging and stories all reinforce and carry your narratives and deep narratives. Your narratives and deep narratives should align to reinforce your narrative system.

CONSIDER THESE TWO QUESTIONS TO START

Q1. Based on your work and values, which deep narratives would you include in your narrative system?

Q2. What worldviews and values would help advance a pro-immigrant future? What combination of deep narratives could produce liberatory cultural conditions for immigrant justice?

Deep Narrative 1:

Deep Narrative 4:

Deep Narrative 2:

Deep Narrative 5:

Narrative System for our FUTURE

Deep Narrative 3:
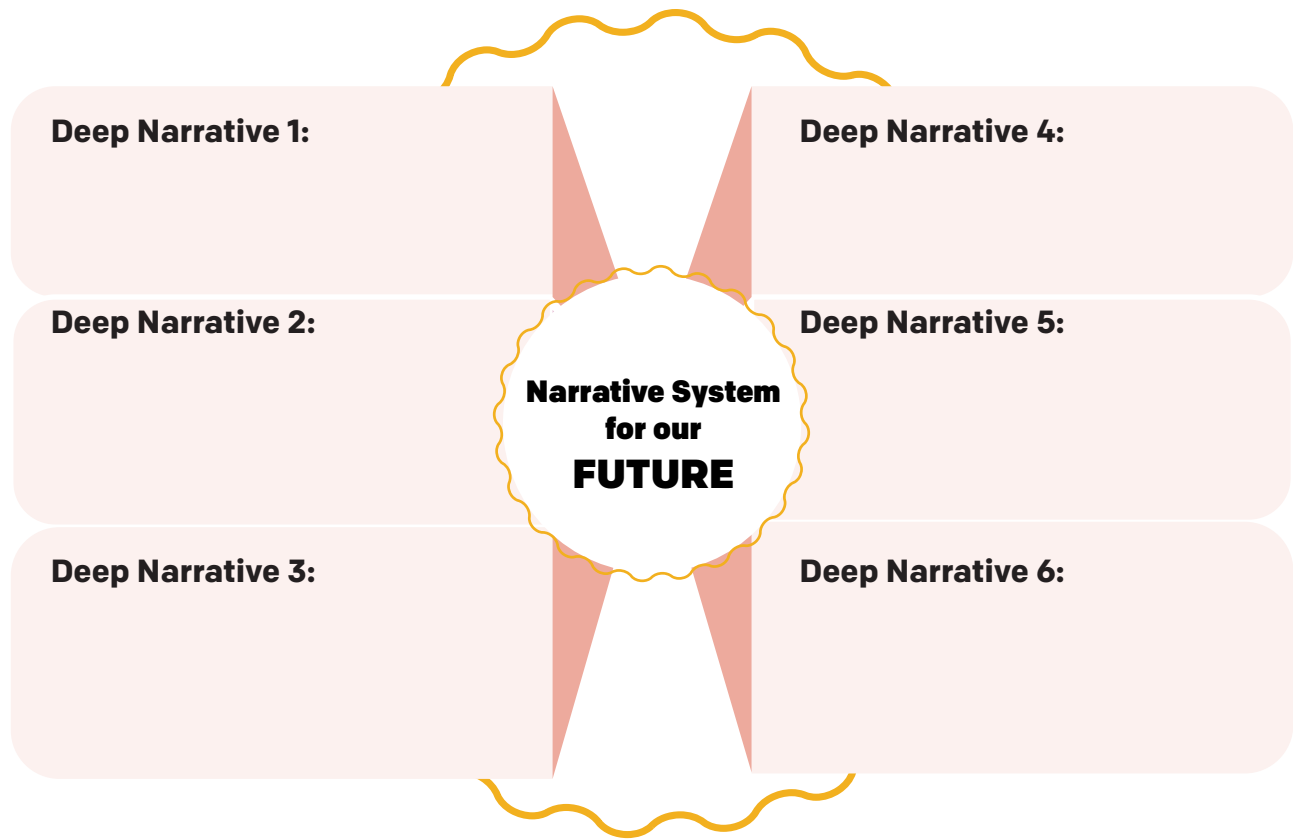
Deep Narrative 6:

All campaigns, projects, activations, and partnerships should align from top to bottom on a narrative pyramid. There should be narratives and deep narratives at the top of each pyramid — which collectively create your narrative system.

Narrative Strategy Creates Alignment

Deep Narrative
↓
Narrative
↓
Story
↓
Message
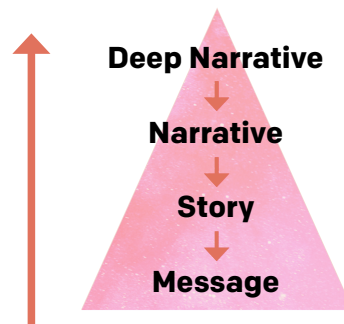
These two frameworks and tools together (pyramid and system) can be used to iteratively check, strengthen and align your narrative work. Using these two frameworks with practice and rigor can also help you circumvent problems with having your messages and stories contradict your deep narratives.

Tip: As you develop your narrative system, be sure to get buy-in and input from your core stakeholders.

Appendix 1:
Butterfly Lab Team

SÁRA ABDULLAH

they/she

sára is a multi-species hearth tender, psychopomp, experience curator, and cosmic poet. They are a future transcestor of Arab, Iranian, and Pinxy lineages descended from nomadic dreamweavers, kitchen witches, tricksters, storytellers, land stewards, and sea-faring people. She currently lives in exile from her homelands practicing how to be in right relationship as a visitor on unceded <u>Canarsee Lenape</u> land.

Their work and life rhythms over the past decade have been shaped by their relationship to ancestral remembrance, trauma aware healing, play, curiosity, liminality, restfulness, a care ethic, discernment, spiral time, and reconnection to the earth and cosmos. These are guiding principles for how they arrive in work formations and culture building. In addition to serving as the Community of Practice Lead for the Butterfly Lab for Immigrant Narrative Strategy, she also recently joined AORTA, a worker-owned cooperative of facilitators and strategists devoted to helping movements renew a stronger sense of liberatory vision, values, and purpose. They are an alum of the Laundromat Project Create Change Fellowship '14, Betty's Daughter Arts Collaborative Public Performance Art Fellowship '17-'18, and Needing It: Solo Performance in Queer Community '18. Her writing has appeared on Autostraddle, and her solo performance work has appeared at Asian American Writers Workshop, JACK Theater, and the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics.

When she is in flow, you can find sára frolicking in the forests and waterways of Turtle Island, feeding their love of learning, crafting, romancing the moon, talking to plants, ritualizing their daily life, and nurturing collaborations. She is also the Steward of Vision & Possibility at earth seed holistic, a practice providing botanical offerings, herbal consultations, creativity coaching, divination, full-spectrum companionship, and community education rooted in plant medicine, cosmic wisdom, and nurturing the creative spirit. Learn more about their work at <u>earthseedholistic.com</u>

JEFF CHANG

he/him/'oia

I am a writer, teacher, and cultural organizer of Chinese and Native Hawaiian descent. I was a co-founder of CultureStrike (now the Center for Cultural Power), the Culture Group, and the Cultural New Deal. I have been working in what we now call narrative and cultural strategy for over twenty-five years. My books are about the power of creativity, community-building and racial and cultural justice, and include Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation, We Gon' Be Alright: Notes on Race and Resegregation, and Who We Be: a Cultural History of Race in Post-Civil Rights America. I aspire to kūpono by my ancestors, my families and communities, and my descendants.

KANA HAMMON

she/her

I am a narrative strategist and nonprofit leader with 10 years of experience launching programs, organizations, mobile apps and digital campaigns. I am fourth generation Japanese American and grew up in a fabulous tradition of oral history. In addition to working with the Butterfly Lab, I am the Narrative Strategist at Asian American Futures, where I conducted groundbreaking audience research on Millennial and GenZ AANHPIs. I have also worked in cultural strategy with the May 19th Project and Emerging Radiance; in philanthropy and in Silicon Valley. I have a BA in ethnic studies and an MBA, both from Stanford University. Outside of work, I enjoy cooking, surfing and hiking near my home in the San Francisco Bay Area.

NAYANTARA SEN

she/her

I am a trilingual storyteller, first-generation Bengali immigrant, narrative and cultural strategist, educator, oral historian, and lover of short fiction and films. I am the Director of Field and Funder Learning at the Pop Culture Collaborative. I design, incubate and nurture projects at the intersections of narrative and culture change, innovation, storytelling and systems change. I advise, support and educate in collaboration with a broad range of organizations and networks focused on equity, justice and the arts, including: The Constellations Initiative at the Center for Cultural Power, San Jose Museum of Art, MOSAIC, South Asians SOAR, Collective Change Labs, and the Interaction for Social Change. My background is in decolonial movement strategy, racial justice organizing, organizational development and change, public program design and arts administration. In my work, I generate integrity, wellness, love and joy, which is essential as we struggle through a toxic political and cultural climate. My writing includes Creating Cultures and Practices for Racial Equity: A Toolbox, the Cultural Strategy Primer, and more recently, Stories for Change with Storyline Partners.

ANGELICA "BABAY" TOLENTINO

she/they

I am a Pilipinx interdisciplinary artist, educator, cultural strategist and rest practitioner from the seas and lands of Olongapo, Philippines, Okinawa, Japan, and San Diego, CA. I come from dancers, karate masters, teachers, seamstresses, rice vendors and powerful community builders and storytellers. We value communal knowledge, merienda, funk, soul, and the drums. We listen with our heart and body while centering rest, joy, and spirit as a practice of liberation. I hold a B.A. in Ethnic Studies from UC San Diego and a Masters of Arts in Urban Education and Social Justice with a Single Subject Teaching Credential in Social Studies from USF. I have 15+ years of experience as an educator, mental health worker, and grassroots organizer in South East San Diego, Oakland, CA, and Queens, NY. I have also battled/cyphered in the styles of breaking, rocking, whacking and ritual performance for 15+ years. I produce community engaged projects, artist incubators, multimodal installations, and public performances centering decolonial intergenerational healing and JOY. Most recently, I have been the founder of Olongapo Disco, The Shake It Show, and an Individual Artist Fellow for the California Arts Council.

JANELLE TREIBITZ

she/her

I am a narrative and cultural strategist with a background in campaign organizing. I am a fourth generation Coloradan, a puppeteer, and a proud mother of two young children. I have worn many hats for Race Forward's Butterfly Lab for Immigrant Narrative Strategy, most recently leading our research work. I also work regularly with the Center for Cultural Power, supporting the design and integration of narrative strategies into their programmatic work. In the lead-up to the 2020 Presidential election I was the Network Strategist for Culture Surge, coordinating partnerships with movement groups and artists to inspire civic engagement and to protect the integrity of the ballot count. For several years I coordinated the Creative Change network of artists, activists, and influencers for The Opportunity Agenda, and organized their annual flagship Creative Change Retreat. I have 20 years of experience collaborating with local, national, and international social justice organizations and grassroots campaigns, helping them to incorporate narrative and cultural strategies and creative tactics into their work. I have also worked for over a decade with the political theater troupe, the Bread and Puppet Theater. I am a contributor to the book *We Are Many: Reflections on Movement Strategy from Occupation to Liberation* (AK Press).

Appendix 2:
Chrysalis Lab Members,
2022–23

» Intelligent Mischief

TERRY MARSHALL

He/Him/His

Terry Marshall is an artist, strategist and cultural studies scholar living in Brooklyn by way of Barbados and Boston. He has 20-plus years of experience as a labor and cultural organizer and previously founded the Hip Hop Media Lab and Streets is Watching. He is currently a Senior Fellow at the USC Annenberg Innovation Lab Civic Media Fellowship.

AISHA SHILLINGFORD

she, her, hers

Aisha Shillingford is a multi-disciplinary artist, world builder, designer and cultural strategist originally from Trinidad & Tobago. She is an alumna of Laundromat Project's Creative Change Fellowship, a member of the New Museum Incubator, and an inaugural Fellow at the Race Forward Butterfly Lab for Immigrant Narrative Strategy. Her work has been commissioned by the Movement for Black Lives, Root Rise Pollinate and Creative Wild Fire.

HAWAH HANKINS

she/her

Hawah Hankins is a daydreamer, learner and life path explorer from New Orleans. She has taught ESL in South Korea, interned at Peace Corps in Washington D.C and worked as a librarian at Texas A&M University. She has a BA in Communication/Public Relations and a MS in Human Resource Development. She enjoys helping creative minds cultivate imaginative ideas by interweaving organizational strategy with artistic expression.

» Little Syria

OMAR OFFENDUM

He / Him / His

Omar Offendum is a Syrian-American rapper and poet living in New York. Known for his unique blend of Hip-Hop and Arabic poetry, he has been featured on prominent world news outlets, lectured at dozens of universities, collaborated with major museums and helped raise millions of dollars for humanitarian relief efforts around the globe. Offendum is a Kennedy Center Citizen Artist Fellow; a member of the PILLARS Fund 'Muslim Narrative Change' cohort; and the creator of the poetry and musical production Little Syria.

RIDWAN ADHAMI

he/him

Ridwan Adhami is a multidisciplinary creative director, photographer, and film-maker. He has worked in numerous creative direction roles in the humanitarian space at Comic Relief US, Penny Appeal USA and Islamic Relief USA. Adhami also collaborated with the street artist Shepard Fairey and the Amplifier Foundation on the "We the People" campaign, which flooded the street on Inauguration Day 2017 with new symbols of hope. Ridwan's first TED Talk, titled, "Creating Art with Purpose and Patience" chronicles the creation and impact of this collaboration and his career's work on the journey of identity through creative mediums.

RONNIE MALLEY

he/him

Ronnie Malley is a multi-instrumentalist musician, theatrical performer, producer, and educator. He is executive director of Intercultural Music Production in Chicago and a teaching artist with Chicago Public Schools. Ronnie's theatre credits include the Broadway musical tour of the Tony Award Winning The Band's Visit and Disney's The Jungle Book. He also performs with the music groups Allos Musica, Apollo's Fire, Surabhi Ensemble, and more.

» Muslim Futures Project

KARIM AHMAD

he/they

Karim Ahmad is a writer, culture strategist, organizer, member of the Guild of Future Architects, and the founder of Restoring the Future, a network of community partners using worldbuilding and industry organizing to build a more just and beautiful media arts system. He was the Creator and Showrunner of the groundbreaking science fiction series, FUTURESTATES, and the writer of the upcoming speculative fiction comic book, DIVIDE.

RYAH AQEL

she/her

Ryah Aqel is a cultural producer, writer, and multimedia artist interested in the relationship between indigenous communities, identity and land, in Palestine and beyond. Currently, she is an Associate Producer at Multitude Films. In 2020, she produced Darine Hotait and Hala Alyan's TALLAHASSEE, distributed by The New Yorker. She was previously a Sundance Institute Knight Foundation fellow and a Sundance Institute Women in Film Finance & Strategy Intensive fellow.

» TIRRC

About the Team

EMILY BAIRD-CHRISOHON

she/her

As the Narrative & Engagement Manager with TIRRC, Emily Baird-Chrisohon leads a proactive campaign focused on shaping narratives and moving people towards more pro-immigrant sentiments and active engagement. Emily oversees TIRRC's deep canvassing work, faith leader network, Welcoming Tennessee Initiative, and more. Prior to joining TIRRC, Emily was the Regional Organizer with Religions for Peace USA and the Director of A Seat At The Table Knoxville.

Appendix 3:
Training Partners

Thank you to the following organizations for their partnership:

350.org

350.org is an international movement of ordinary people working to end the age of fossil fuels and build a world of community-led renewable energy for all.

The Center for Cultural Power

The Center for Cultural Power is a women of color, artist-led organization, inspiring artists and culture makers to imagine a world where power is distributed equitably and where we live in harmony with nature. We support artists through fellowships, training and opportunities for activation. We create intersectional stories and content addressing issues of migration, climate, gender and racial justice. We engage groups in cultural strategy and organize artists in issues that inspire them. Together with allies, we are co-creating a field of cultural strategy with organizations and practitioners through convenings, design teams and strategy tables.

National Domestic Workers Alliance and Families Belong Together

The National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) works to win respect, recognition, and labor rights and protections for the nearly 2.5 million nannies, housecleaners, and homecare workers who do the essential work of caring for our loved ones and our homes.

Families Belong Together is a campaign of the National Domestic Workers Alliance formed in response to the 2018 family separation crisis. Families Belong Together works with nearly 250 organizations representing Americans from all backgrounds who have joined together to fight family separation and promote dignity, unity and compassion for all children and families.

National Immigration Law Center

Established in 1979, the National Immigration Law Center (NILC) is one of the leading organizations in the U.S. exclusively dedicated to defending and advancing the rights of immigrants with low income.

At NILC, we believe that all people who live in the U.S. should have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Over the years, we've been at the forefront of many of the country's greatest challenges when it comes to immigration issues, and we play a major leadership role in addressing the real-life impact of policies that affect the ability of low-income immigrants to prosper and thrive.

National Partnership for New Americans

NPNA exists to advance an immigrant equity and inclusion agenda at the state, local and federal level through policy, advocacy, and service programs that create vast opportunities for immigrant and refugee communities to achieve full civic, social and economic justice.

National Immigrant Inclusion Conference

A project of the National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA), the National Immigrant Inclusion Conference (NIIC) is the nation's largest gathering of the entire sector working on behalf of our country's immigrants and refugees and the annual gathering of NPNA's network.

United We Dream Network

United We Dream is the largest immigrant youth-led community in the country. We create welcoming spaces for young people – regardless of immigration status – to support, engage, and empower them to make their voice heard and win!

Appendix 4:
The State of Narrative Work Across the Pro-Immigrant Movement

BECAUSE OF THE STILL-EMERGENT NATURE OF NARRATIVE STRATEGY in the pro-immigrant movement, and the Butterfly Lab's unique position as the first project of its kind, we learned a lot about the state of narrative work across the pro-immigrant movement.

First, the diversity, breadth, and quality of the work currently occurring in the movement is astonishing. We received 89 applications over the span of 4 weeks for 4 grants. Over 150 people attended our Chrysalis Lab information session.

This body of work fueled a huge demand for immigrant narrative funding. While much of the funded, high-level narrative work over the past decade has focused on national initiatives, local grassroots organizations have also been collapsing funder-driven silos of advocacy and culture. Half of the applications were local, state, or regional projects, while 32% were national projects and the rest were global or online.

We were impressed by the diversity of work happening at all levels and the venues through which they are happening. Projects from artists, artist-led organizations, and cultural institutions made up 43% of the applications. 35% came from community-based organizations (CBOs). 23% were collaborations between CBOs and artists/artist-led/cultural orgs.

Local organizations have been prolific in partnering with artists and cultural strategists and creating narrative projects, but these projects are often unfunded and using surplus organizational 'risk capital'. Such projects may not need sizable grants to reach scale or have major impact in their settings. Funders, including arts funders, should consider unrestricted funding for such projects as a way to foster innovation.

The proliferation of such work highlights the need for a coordinated strategy to target and organize local, state, regional, and group-specific funders with the aim of breaking down silos of advocacy and arts funding to advance immigrant narratives. Funders and narrative leaders in the movement—who, on the advocacy side, tend to be based in national organizations—need to think more about how to connect, develop, and build capacities in the ecosystem at local and regional levels.

The field—especially local organizations and individuals—would greatly benefit from investments in disseminating shared language and concepts, aligning narrative systems, coaching and technical assistance, matchmaking and ecosystem building, and future-building. Local organizations tend to lack a larger sense of alignment with national organizations on narrative. However, this alignment could be accomplished easily through strategic use of the narrative system process. As an example, #BlackLivesMatter and #metoo created alignment rapidly by advancing their narratives at the local and national level simultaneously. Movement alignment could take place fairly quickly with research and narrative development guiding the right investments and execution.

Local organizations also often remain outside of the centers of narrative innovation, lacking access to best practices and the latest research. The applications we received also told us that some may need matchmaking, whether community organizations seeking creative partners or the other way around. Ecosystem building could be accelerated through investments in service functions, such as convening, coaching, or technical assistance, built on a foundation of shared language and curriculum.

Currently, there are also no funds for future-building efforts. Instead, organizations and individuals are mostly drawn into the necessity of the moment, reinforcing a focus on reactive campaign work, short-term messaging, and strategic communications. At the same time, organizations and individuals hope for narrative funds to do 'blue sky' thinking. The movement is unable to do the necessary work of aligning short-term efforts such as campaigns and rapid-response work with mid- and long-term efforts that attempt future-building. This alignment work will require planning, facilitation, and investment as well.

Narrative Project Recommendations for Funders

- To build narrative power, offer funding at multiple levels and across multiple issues, approaches, and timelines at once.

- Invest in advancing shared language, curriculum, coaching, and technical assistance, not just at the national level, but especially among regional and local organizations. Such work might be held by intermediaries or national organizations, but should target building capacity, aligning narrative strategies, and connecting ecosystems from the grassroots level up.

- Invest in more alignment across issues, approaches, and timelines for the movement, along with research to determine paths towards the Butterfly Lab narrative system.

- Invest further in underdeveloped populations and areas of opportunity, including faith-based organizing, disability justice, Black, Indigenous, Muslim American and Asian and Pacific Islander populations, and more.

- Organize funders to coordinate a strategy to target and organize local, state, regional, and group-specific funders with the aim of breaking down silos of advocacy and arts funding to advance immigrant narratives.

- Create more opportunities for future-building across the movement to develop and align short-term time horizon thinking, planning, and executing with mid-and long-term thinking in order to build a diverse, balanced approach to narrative power-building.

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A FUTURE FOR ALL OF US
PART 2

BUTTERFLY LAB
for Immigrant Narrative Strategy

Janelle Treibitz

Kana Hammon

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Butterfly Lab Research Overview

THE BUTTERFLY LAB LAUNCHED IN 2020 to advance pro-immigrant narratives that recognize and honor the humanity of immigrants and advance freedom and justice for all. Our goal was to build narrative capacity for the movement and learn more about how we might create an aligned narrative strategy to build a pro-immigrant majority. In Phase 1 of the Lab, which was completed in 2021, we worked with sixteen immigrant narrative leaders who launched prototype projects that we supported with audience and impact research. This cohort of movement and cultural leaders understood that our current status quo is built upon a set of underlying beliefs and assumptions — deep narratives — that guide how we structure our society, what we believe is possible, and how we justify our behaviors and systems. We worked with this cohort to define the set of deep narratives that together can create a pro-immigrant worldview. This set of deep narratives became our Narrative System.

The Butterfly Lab's Narrative System represents the destination towards which we want to bring all of our audiences. But how do we move audiences from the toxic deep narratives that drive the status quo to the deep narratives of our pro-immigrant Narrative System? This question was at the core of the research we've conducted over the past year.
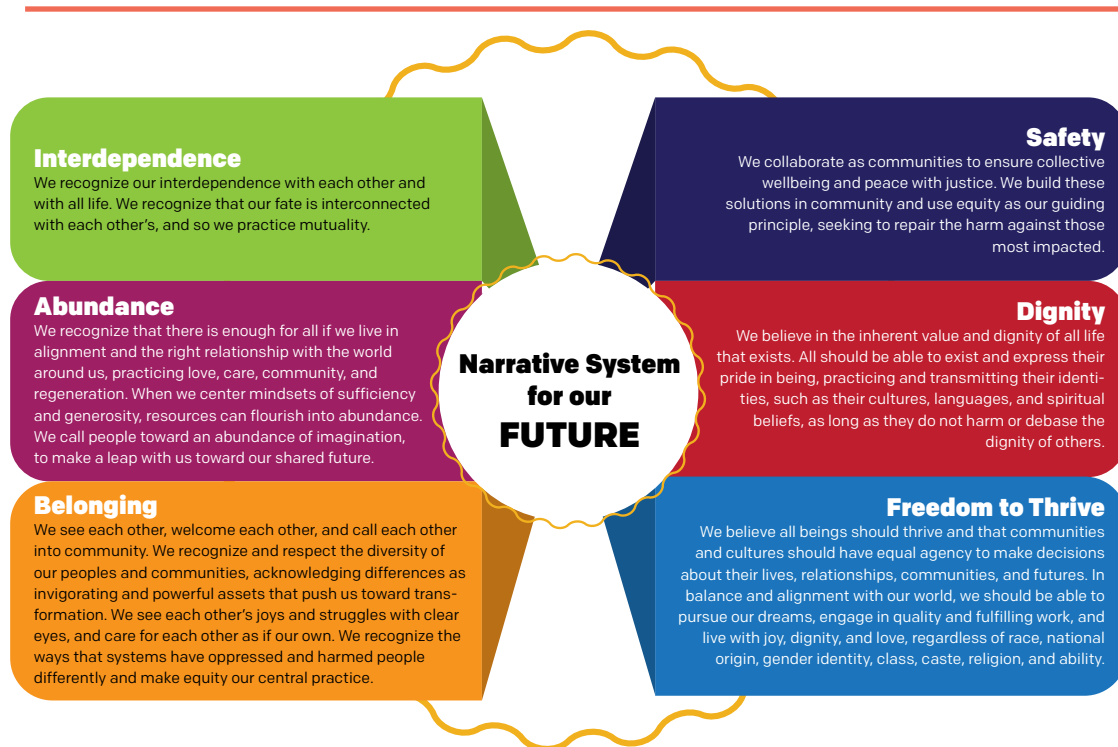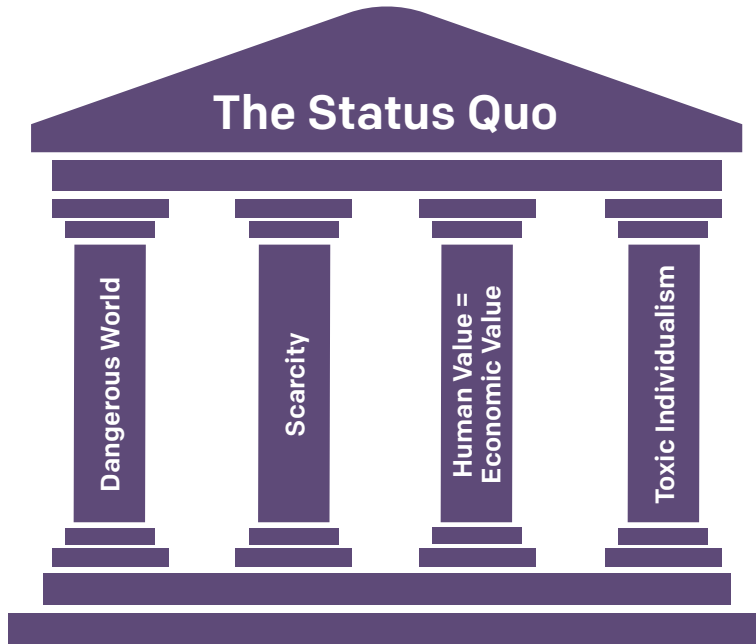
In order to move towards building a pro-immigrant majority in this country, we decided to focus our research on understanding what moves "stretch audiences" — those audiences who are not yet with us but, with some effort and intervention, could be — rather than "core audiences" — those audiences who are with us already). Both stretch and core audiences exist amongst liberals, conservatives, independents, and everyone in between. The distinction for our work is whether they have a reliably pro-immigrant worldview. Every organization will have their own stretch audiences that they define based on the goals of their campaign, initiative, or strategy. We believe that building a robust narrative ecosystem that is equipped to persuade many types of stretch audiences will help us win long-term.

Our research had two phases. In the first, we partnered with The Opportunity Agenda and Worthy Strategy Group (with support from Kirk Cheyfitz Political Strategies) to conduct qualitative research in a metaphor elicitation process.[1] This allowed us to identify some of the

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[1]   Portions of our report originally appeared as a research brief co-published by the Butterfly Lab and The Opportunity Agenda to report findings on our joint research from the Belonging Study. Research was conducted by Gretchen Barton. We gratefully acknowledge Charlie Sherman from The Opportunity Agenda, who contributed writing to the "Where Our Audiences Are Now" section.

underlying drivers of attitudes about immigration and what audiences would need to support a future where all people could make the choice to move where their lives would be best.

In the second phase we turned these learnings into content and used randomized controlled trials to understand which concepts, themes, or storytelling approaches would successfully move audiences toward a pro-immigrant mindset and inoculate them against fear-based opposition narratives. We worked closely with Grow Progress, Riki Conrey from Harmony Labs, and Milan de Vries to assist with our testing and analysis in this phase.

The Status Quo

- Dangerous World
- Scarcity
- Human Value = Economic Value
- Toxic Individualism

Narrative System for our FUTURE

Interdependence
We recognize our interdependence with each other and with all life. We recognize that our fate is interconnected with each other's, and so we practice mutuality.

Safety
We collaborate as communities to ensure collective wellbeing and peace with justice. We build these solutions in community and use equity as our guiding principle, seeking to repair the harm against those most impacted.

Abundance
We recognize that there is enough for all if we live in alignment and the right relationship with the world around us, practicing love, care, community, and regeneration. When we center mindsets of sufficiency and generosity, resources can flourish into abundance. We call people toward an abundance of imagination, to make a leap with us toward our shared future.

Dignity
We believe in the inherent value and dignity of all life that exists. All should be able to exist and express their pride in being, practicing and transmitting their identities, such as their cultures, languages, and spiritual beliefs, as long as they do not harm or debase the dignity of others.

Belonging
We see each other, welcome each other, and call each other into community. We recognize and respect the diversity of our peoples and communities, acknowledging differences as invigorating and powerful assets that push us toward transformation. We see each other's joys and struggles with clear eyes, and care for each other as if our own. We recognize the ways that systems have oppressed and harmed people differently and make equity our central practice.

Freedom to Thrive
We believe all beings should thrive and that communities and cultures should have equal agency to make decisions about their lives, relationships, communities, and futures. In balance and alignment with our world, we should be able to pursue our dreams, engage in quality and fulfilling work, and live with joy, dignity, and love, regardless of race, national origin, gender identity, class, caste, religion, and ability.

In order to assess a pro-immigrant mindset, we measured three things:

- whether audiences agreed immigrants, including undocumented immigrants, belong in America;

- whether they agreed that people should be able to move freely in or out of the country even if it meant more immigrants moving into their neighborhoods; and

- whether they could imagine a future where moving between countries is as straightforward as getting a driver's license.

Rather than identifying specific messages for the movement or testing support for specific policies, we aimed instead to uncover *storytelling elements* that could be layered onto many types of stories to strengthen their efficacy with different audiences.

We found that even the most conservative and fearful audiences already have pro-immigrant values, and will move given the right conditions. They, too, want to see an immigration system that works, but they are easily swayed by fear-based narratives.

We hope that others in the movement can use our findings as a launchpad to tell more stories and advance narratives that persuade stretch audiences, build a pro-immigrant majority in the United States, and invite lasting transformation.

Our concept testing uncovered several story elements that activate their pro-immigrant worldview, even in the presence of opposition narratives:

- Taking audiences on a positive, hopeful journey that culminates in a positive vision for how life could be;

- Acknowledging audiences' fears about a changing America; and

- Showing how a shared future can be better for everyone, including them.

Where Our Audiences Are Now

People dream of a better future.

Across all audience segments and ideologies, people dream of creating a peaceful world that is better for everyone, where everyone can choose to live wherever their life would be best, where everyone can thrive, where we invest in our future so we can leave the world a better place than we found it. They want a future that is calm, safe, and orderly, and where the rules make sense and are followed.

Audiences long for community, and want a world where families, communities, and neighboring nations reconnect. They want a better, safer, more secure future for their kids. They envision a future where there is enough for everyone, where communities help and celebrate each other, and where people work together to solve problems.

And they want a better immigration system.

We found that beliefs about immigration and immigrants don't track cleanly along partisan lines. Pro-immigrant values were strong across all audience segments, and our interview participants — no matter their ideology — expressed having twice as much confidence in immigrants over the American people. They agreed that the immigration system is broken and is harming immigrants and non-immigrants alike.

People in all segments described the current system as **impossible to maintain, unenforceable,** and **unfairly applied.** Whether left- or right-leaning, many even had similar ideas to improve the system. They suggested:

- **Increasing resources** to simplify and speed-up a process that seems complicated and lengthy, while keeping "bad actors" out.

- **Increasing access to legal immigration options** to diminish the need to migrate without documentation.

- **Streamlining the refugee and asylum process** to welcome those fleeing danger more quickly.

But fear often outweighs audiences' pro-immigrant values.

We have seen repeatedly through our research that most people — across all segments — hold deeply seated pro-immigrant values. But right now, audiences are scared. They are not sure if they're safe — from pandemics, guns, climate change, or war. They don't feel valued and don't feel heard. On top of that, every audience segment revealed anxieties sown by fear-based anti-immigrant dominant narratives: they're afraid of "chaos" at the border, "criminals" and "terrorists" whom they believe might be trying to get into the country, and demographic change.

When people feel afraid, they are easily pulled into a scarcity mindset, where they turn inwards and try to conserve what is theirs, unwilling to expand beyond what's known and what feels safe and familiar. We saw scarcity and fear driving how most audiences currently form their views on immigrants and immigration.

We heard from interviewees that rules and structure would make them feel less afraid and help them support a future in which everyone has the freedom to move. But when we tested content that affirmed rules and structure or reframed what safety might look like, we did not see those elements consistently contribute to moving any of our audience segments toward more pro-immigrant positions. We suspect we see these inconsistencies because, as immigrants and organizers have long pointed out, racism is playing a role in how this fear is activated against immigrants. Our suspicion is that the need for safety and order grows from an anti-immigrant paradigm, not the other way around.

Paths Forward

PEOPLE ENVISION AND DESIRE A PRO-IMMIGRANT FUTURE where moving freely across borders benefits all of us. But fear prevents us from getting to the better future that everyone already wants. What helps audiences move from holding pro-immigrant values to activating a pro-immigrant mindset? How do we move people past their fear and bias? Our research has begun to answer these questions, revealing some clear paths forward.

The current narrative paradigm around immigration is built on racialized fear. Specifically, the fears of chaos, danger, scarcity, and change. Based on our research, we believe that moving audiences away from fear and toward a pro-immigrant narrative paradigm may be possible when we show them the future we know they already want.

The strategy of some of the most successful opposition narratives is about painting a future that is chaotic, dangerous, zero-sum, and terrifying to most audiences. One of the most extreme narratives has been making astonishing headway recently. Known as the Great Replacement Theory, this narrative brings all of these elements together, arguing that immigrants and other groups are displacing and marginalizing whites. With the specter of this dystopian future attached to immigrants and immigration narratives, it becomes hard for audiences to imagine solutions.

But our job is not, as researcher Riki Conrey affirmed for us, "to play on the opposition's field. We have our own story to tell. We don't want to define success just by overcoming the opposition's success." So we tested content that we felt would evoke the world we want to create. Much of our content had a significant impact in moving audiences, most surprisingly with some of the most conservative audiences.

The content that was able to increase support for immigrants and immigration in the face of the opposition's toxic dystopian narratives — even among audiences we expected to be the most resistant — were stories that both addressed audiences' fear of cultural, societal or personal change while describing a pro-immigrant future where the freedom to move is available to everyone.

The freedom to move is a powerful idea with potential to persuade all audiences.

Our research showed that the freedom to move is a powerful idea with potential to persuade all audiences. We know this idea holds power for immigrants who attempt to exercise this freedom. But we found it holds power for stretch audiences, too. When stretch audiences were able to see how they could also benefit from free movement, it opened them to think about immigration from a different paradigm. When they were able to imagine themselves as having this freedom, they were more open to extending that same freedom to others.

Our core audiences respond to calls for action on what's "right" or "humanitarian". But we found that stretch audiences want to see immigration as a two-way street, where there is mutual benefit. We tried many ways to illustrate mutual benefit in our testing, and we had the most success with stories describing a world in which everyone has the freedom to move.

To help you craft effective, persuasive stories that build pro-immigrant support, we offer these three findings from our research:

- **We can create persuasive stories for specific audiences by understanding what journey they each need and then designing narratives and stories accordingly.** We found that to move audiences, we needed to take them on a journey that ends with a positive vision of what life could be. But there are important differences in storytelling that persuade different audiences; see our Audience Snapshot section to learn what worked for different audiences. Regardless of what stories we told, our storytelling was future-oriented, designed to move audiences toward our long-term goal of a pro-immigrant paradigm.

- **cknowledging and addressing audiences' fear of change helps clear a path for people to overcome fear-based opposition narratives**. Audiences' fear of change seems to grow from a core fear of loss – losing control, losing a way of life, or losing status and the ability to thrive. We developed content to test how we might move people away from a fear of change. We started where people were at by acknowledging emotions or anxieties in a non-judgmental way, and ended with a story of change that included those audiences. We didn't validate those fears, but instead showed how change could be better for us all, or showed how change is part of a larger story of the endurance of our shared values.

- **Telling stories of a positive, hopeful future are a critical bridge to a pro-immigrant mindset.** Especially for audiences primed for zero-sum thinking, it was important to illustrate how a pro-immigrant future is better for everyone, including them. Stories about the future are where we most effectively activated audiences' desire for the freedom to move. We found it effective to paint a picture of the future without conceptual words like "justice" or "equity", while describing the tangible benefits of a future in which those things were true. We also found it helpful to include hints of a structured, accessible immigration process as part of the future — not by mentioning systems directly, but by describing the *results* of having an easy and efficient immigration process.

In the following sections we'll dive in more deeply to these lessons. We acknowledge that which of these lessons apply to you will depend on your goals and the audiences you are prioritizing. We do not offer universal "recommendations", but instead frame the following lessons as insights which you can apply and experiment with in your work according to your own needs.

In the spirit of Linda Sarsour's declaration at the 2022 NIIC conference, "We are a movement where unity is not uniformity", we hope that there will be something useful here for everyone.

Creating Persuasive Stories for Specific Audiences

We created and tested 58 distinct pieces of content to learn what would move different audiences toward a pro-immigrant mindset. We were able to move every audience segment toward pro-immigrant support with a variety of storytelling concepts and approaches. But what persuaded one audience didn't always work for another. As we refined content across our rounds of testing, we learned which elements worked best for whom.

However, we did find these three storytelling practices to be consistently useful across all audience segments:

- **We designed stories for specific audiences.** We want to first affirm that not all audiences need to like all the stories we tell. We do not need to pander or gloss over stories that are important to us. But when we are targeting a specific audience and have a particular persuasion goal, designing *how* we tell that story matters. As you see in the following *Audience Snapshot* section, we learned there are important differences in storytelling that persuade different audiences. The angles or elements or imagery we used made the difference between whether we achieved pro-immigrant support for a particular audience or not. We were able to tell stories we wanted to tell, but designed them based on what we knew about our audiences. We also learned where our audiences still need to grow beyond what our content could achieve. [2]

- **We took audiences on a journey that ended in a positive vision of what life could be.** We began by acknowledging audiences' fears of a changing America. We shared rich personal stories of desired experiences like cultural sharing or celebrations that evoked relatable emotions. We ended either by reassuring audiences that shared values like respect, freedom, and hard work were here to stay, or by describing how a future where everyone has the freedom to move could be safer, more efficient, more free, and allow all of us to thrive. Including a vision for a better reality — now or in the future — is important because although stretch audiences *want* to believe a better immigration system is possible, most of what they see in daily life shows the opposite. In fact, content without a vision rarely fared positively. Offering a vision worked for all audiences.

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2   See the "Future Directions for Research" section for insights about opportunities to grow our audiences into stories to which they don't yet respond.

- **Our storytelling was oriented around our long-term goal, designed to move audiences toward a pro-immigrant worldview.** Even when creating content that tried to meet people where they were at, we didn't soft pedal our vision: a society where all of us will have the freedom to move where our lives will be best, to thrive and be welcomed. Our content was aligned with the Butterfly Lab Narrative System, aimed to reinforce the values and ideas that build a pro-immigrant worldview. It is worth noting that the only content not aligned with our deep narratives that did well were "good immigrant" storylines, in which immigrants work hard and assimilate. We discuss the pitfalls and possible solutions of "good immigrant" stories further on, in the Future Directions for Research section of our report. We offer additional details on what persuades different audiences below, followed by examples of four high-performing pieces of content that successfully persuaded those audiences.

We offer additional details on what persuades different audiences below, followed by examples of four high-performing pieces of content that successfully persuaded those audiences.

WHAT PERSUADES DIFFERENT AUDIENCES:
A Closer Look

To understand how attitudes differ across the population, we used Harmony Labs' Narrative Observatory Audiences, a way to segment audiences according to their core values and cultural consumption, rather than the more common audience segmentation strategies of differentiating by demographics, geography, or political affiliation. A values-based segmentation allows us to understand audiences relative to the culture and narratives in which they are steeped, and can reveal unexpected insights into where audiences have commonalities or differences, what motivates them, and what can persuade them.

Distilled here is what we know about each audience segment, what we learned about what moves them toward a pro-immigrant mindset, and the storytelling elements that facilitate that shift:

AUDIENCE SEGMENTS & THEIR CORE VALUES:

PURSUE

People Power

COMMUNITY
All kinds of people coming together can fix the system.

If You Say So

AUTONOMY
There may be no one way to succeed, but freedom to make our own choices is paramount.

WE

ME

Tough Cookies

ORDER
Playing by the rules is the key to success.

Don't Tread on Me

AUTHORITY
Strong leadership and hard work is the solution.

PROTECT

Adapted from Harmony Labs. For more information, see
https://obiaudiences.org/audiences/

People Power:

Community-minded, politically engaged, and ready to fight for system reform to solve social issues. They skew college-educated and Democrat and believe all types of people coming together will create change. Many people in progressive social movements are People Power. We often consider this segment to be part of our core audience, but they also can be surprisingly soft in their commitment to supporting immigrants.

What Persuades People Power:

Pro-immigrant support in this group is already high, and we were able to increase their support with content featuring personal stories as well as emotion-based idealistic content. Though justice-oriented, they appear to also be influenced by anti-immigrant and other racially-motivated, fear-based narratives. Islamophobia surfaced strongly in this audience. When faced with a fear-based opposition narrative based on the Great Replacement Theory, their support only increased if we both addressed their fear of change and described a positive future where everyone has the freedom to move.

If You Say So:

Independent realists who know the system is broken but are skeptical that there are real solutions to society's problems. They span all races, skew younger, and value choice and autonomy. More interested in enjoying life than joining movements, this is an audience you'll more likely find at a party or playing video games than at a protest. We often find them at the edge of our core audiences or as stretch audiences.

What Persuades If You Say So:

These audiences had the highest baseline agreement with every pro-immigrant measurement question we asked. More than any other audience segment, they are moved by personal stories, particularly stories with "striving" themes or stories about pushing through the fear of change to enjoy cross-cultural experiences. Fear of change, however, doesn't seem to be an issue with them. Nor do they need a vision of the future to move them, possibly because they already have the ability to imagine a better future. They were moved by the widest variety of content of any audience segment, so long as it demonstrated pragmatism, striving, or pleasure-seeking.

Tough Cookies:

Family-first rule followers who believe that while the system might be broken, hard work can create success. They skew older, span all political parties and love content featuring good deeds and helping hands. They value order and are cautious–of new people, new ideas, changes in the status quo, and more. We often encounter them as stretch audiences and sometimes as opposition audiences.

What Persuades Tough Cookies:

To unlock their pro-immigrant mindset, Tough Cookies need to be reassured that change is natural and positive and that they have a place in a pluralistic future. They need stories forecasting a better future that also benefits them. When faced with a Great Replacement Theory-based opposition narrative, the only thing that overcame it for them was a story that both addressed their fear of change and described a positive future where everyone has the freedom to move.

Don't Tread On Me:

Achievement-oriented, they are strong believers that equal opportunity already exists. They're idealistic, but they're worried they need to be in control to make a better future happen. They skew white, rural and Republican, and value authority, hard work, and determined leadership. We often encounter them as opposition audiences, but they can become stretch audiences.

What Persuades Don't Tread On Me:

Unlike Tough Cookies, Don't Tread on Me audiences are less fearful of change. They love stories that paint a picture of a world where we can all be friends; where we get to experience aspects of other cultures; where people contribute and work hard; and where systems operate efficiently. Though they respond strongly to personal stories, they are primed for "good immigrant"/"bad immigrant" stories and don't respond well to stories with more complex humans. They were able to overcome a Great Replacement Theory-based opposition narrative after viewing content that both addressed fear of change and described a positive future where everyone has the freedom to move.
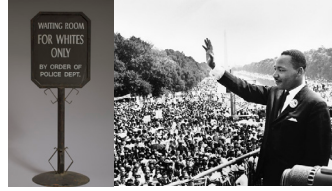
Black, Latinx, and AAPI Audiences:

When we analyzed the results according to audiences' race, we noticed that what moved our Black, Latinx, and AAPI audiences was strikingly similar. To unlock a pro-immigrant mindset, they responded best to stories prominently featuring diverse characters, storytelling that referenced our nation's history with racism and framed change as part of a larger arc toward progress.

Anatomy of a Story

Addressing fear of change

America has changed a lot in the past 245 years. From outhouses to running water. From exclusion to opportunity.

With so much talk of immigration, it can feel like America is changing again. But history shows that change has made our lives easier, safer, and freer.

Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

Hulton Deutsch / Corbis Premium Historical via Getty Images

Imagine in 50 years people can easily travel in and out of the country because we have a safe immigration process that makes it easy.

Evgenia Parajanian / Shutterstock.com

Presenting a positive future

We know who is coming in and out of the country because the freedom to move is available to everyone and the rules are straightforward and easy to follow.

Evgenia Parajanian / Shutterstock.com
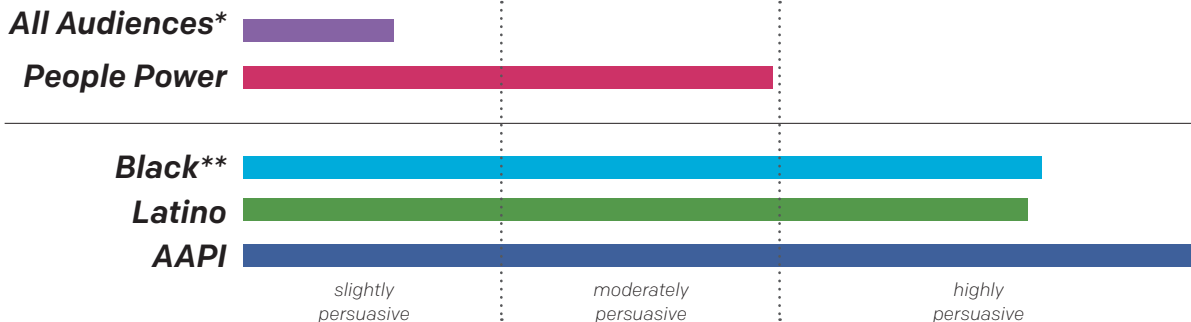
Illustrating the shared benefits of this future

New arrivals are welcomed into communities and we all have friends from many different places. If we want to move to another country, we can.

We all thrive - those of us who were born here and those of us who moved here from other countries.

Dmitry Molchanov/Shutterstock.com

How This Content Influenced Pro-Immigrant Support

We tested the content above against opposition content featuring the Great Replacement Theory and immigrant "inundation" narratives. This graph shows the measured increase in pro-immigrant support after viewing both this content and the opposition content.

All Audiences*

People Power

Black**

Latino

AAPI

slightly persuasive *moderately persuasive* *highly persuasive*

* Only statistically significant results are included, for all audience and demographic segments.
** Racial demographic results include data from all values-based audience segments.

Anatomy of a Story

Modeling a character overcoming their fear of change

This year, my granddaughter married an immigrant from Mexico. I love my granddaughter, but I was worried. Would their wedding even feel like a wedding? What would it be like to have an immigrant in the family?

Rocketclips, Inc. / Shutterstock.com

Their celebration was beautiful. It was full of joy and love like any other. We danced to a mariachi band, then a brass band. We ate Mexican cookies alongside wedding cake. It reminded me of my wedding, where my husband's family tried pierogies for the first time in honor of my Polish grandparents.

But seeing how impossible it was for some of my grandson-in-law's family to get visas just to come to the wedding, it's made me wonder about how we could make a better process.

Presenting an efficient future

Imagine if immigration worked like an airport. If security lines were run efficiently and smoothly with people safely arriving and leaving.

Imagine if we all could choose to live where our life would be best. Imagine in 50 years - when my great-grandkids will be grown - that we have a safe immigration process that makes it easy.

**Positive vision rooted in shared values**

In America, our traditions come from all over the world. We might not all look the same, but we do share enduring American values: the freedom to make the right choices for our families, to give our kids and grandkids a better life than we had, and the love of a great wedding band!

Digital Vision / Photodisc via Getty Images

How This Content Influenced Pro-Immigrant Support

This graph shows the measured increase in pro-immigrant support after viewing this content.

Don't Tread on Me

If You Say So

slightly persuasive | moderately persuasive | highly persuasive
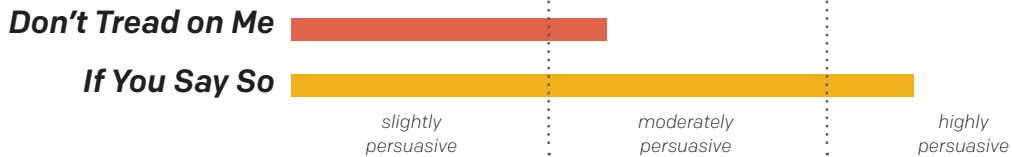
We moved to the US after my mom died. I remember as a child playing hide and seek in my dad's restaurant with my siblings. Every night, my dad would pack leftovers for me to take for lunch. Other kids pointed and laughed at my food. I felt so ashamed.

Image by bigter_choi on Pixabay

When I told my dad, he gave me a hug. The next day, he packed a little extra, with a note: Mr. Kwan's Famous Korean Fried Chicken.
"I triple dog dare you to try some!" I said to the other kids. To their surprise, it was a huge hit.

Rawpixel.com / Shutterstock.com

From that day on, we kids shared sandwiches and Korean cooking for lunch. I felt proud of where I came from and grateful for my dad, who helped us build a new life in America. And I knew I belonged at my new school.

How This Content Influenced Pro-Immigrant Support

This graph shows the measured increase in pro-immigrant support after viewing this content.

All Audiences
Don't Tread on Me
People Power

slightly persuasive   *moderately persuasive*   *highly persuasive*
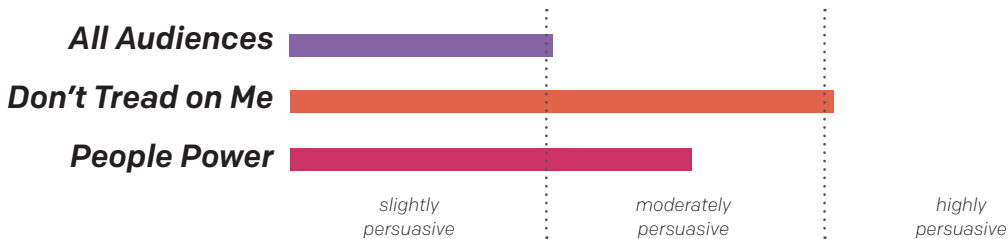
You were hungry and I fed you.

Monkey Business Images / Shutterstock.com

You were naked and I clothed you.

SuperStock / Alamy Stock Photo

You were thirsty, and I gave you water.

Robertus Pudyanto / Getty Images News via Getty Images

You were in need of shelter, and I took you in.

Monkey Business Images / iStock.com

I am always with you...

Monkey Business Images / iStock.com
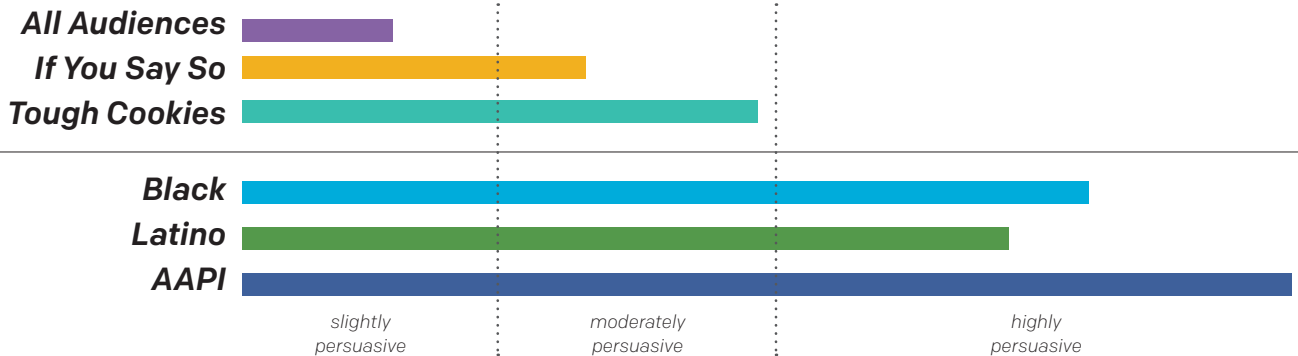
Are you with me?

Drew Angerer / Getty Images News via Getty Images

Based on content submitted by Rachel van Geenhoven at Worksafe

How This Content Influenced Pro-Immigrant Support

This graph shows the measured increase in pro-immigrant support after viewing this content.

- *All Audiences*
- *If You Say So*
- *Tough Cookies*

- *Black*
- *Latino*
- *AAPI*

slightly persuasive · moderately persuasive · highly persuasive

The Necessary Navigation Through Fear of Change

We tested content that addressed audiences' fears of change, chaos, danger, and scarcity. We found that of all these, the fear of change was the most important to address explicitly in order to increase pro-immigrant support. Tackling audience's fears of change[3] required us to take audiences on a journey. We told stories that tried to meet audiences where they were at and lead them past their fears to a brighter reality.

We found that addressing their fear of change alone was able to dramatically increase pro-immigrant support among our most cautious and conservative audiences (Tough Cookies and Don't Tread On Mes). But we also saw that all audience segments responded very positively to content that addressed their fear of change. Content that both addressed the fear of change and told stories about the future was able to beat the the opposition narrative and still significantly increase support for some audiences.[4] Examples of what this looks like are included further down.

We tried several different approaches to addressing fear of change, and most of them worked well for at least one audience segment. The following are the elements that we believe contributed to the contents' success, though not all elements would work easily in the same piece of content:

- **We acknowledged feelings.** A key feature in all of the fear of change content was acknowledging emotions or anxieties in a non-judgmental way. Though we didn't validate the fears, we did acknowledge fear of a diversifying America, fear of cultural difference, fear of being left behind, and fear of change more generally. This acknowledgement served as the starting point for a narrative journey that ended by showing how change could be better for us all, or showing how change is part of a larger story of the endurance of our shared values.

- **We reassured audiences that change includes them.** We noticed that the fears people have mostly grow from a core fear of loss: losing control, losing a way of life, or losing status and the ability to thrive. In all of our fear-of-change content, we started where people were at (fearful of loss) and ended with a story of change that included them. In one particularly successful piece of content, we reframed change as progress using historical examples to show how change has improved our lives over time and will continue doing so. In others, we ended by affirming that even as things change, we still maintain a shared identity or shared values. And in others, we told stories showing how people benefit from changes in their communities and lives.
- **We modeled a person's journey from fearing to embracing change.** We used personal storytelling to show how different people navigated through their fear of

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3   Our work on addressing fear of change was influenced in part by Ashley E. Jardina's research in *White Identity Politics.* (Cambridge University Press, 2019.)
4   Tough Cookies saw a very high   increase in support with content that combined fear of change and storytelling about the future, while Don't Tread On Me's saw high increase with that combination.

change to have experiences that enriched their lives. We used characters with whom our audiences might identify, experimenting with protagonists of different genders, ages, and races. We found that content using this modeling approach worked for all audience segments. However, our most anxious audience (Tough Cookies) resonated more strongly with fear-of-change content that was not part of a personal story, and that was simpler, more general, and less emotional.

- **In order to counter the effects of an opposition narrative, we began our stories by addressing fears of change.** The only piece of content that increased pro-immigrant support in the face of the opposition narrative was content that began with a simple fear-of-change element and then moved into a story about the future. From this we believe that you don't always need to address fear of change up front, but if you're speaking to conservative audiences in a moment when the media is awash with anti-immigrant narratives, acknowledging fear of change can help move audiences in your direction.

To see what addressing the fear of change looks like in action, on the following pages we show three examples of high-performing content that either focus entirely on the fear of change or combine it with other storytelling elements.

I was afraid that all the changes in this country would leave me behind.

Rocketclips, Inc. / Shutterstock.com

But then I met my neighbors who came from Guatemala. We share recipes and stories and look out for each other.

Rawpixel / iStock.com

I feel grateful for these friendships. They make my life more fulfilled, and I feel safer in a strong, connected community. I'd like to see more people like them in my neighborhood.

How This Content Influenced Pro-Immigrant Support

This graph shows the measured increase in pro-immigrant support after viewing this content.

All Audiences

If You Say So

Black

slightly persuasive   moderately persuasive   highly persuasive

America has changed a lot in the past 245 years.

From outhouses…   **…to running water.**

vm / iStock.com   *stevecoleimages / iStock.com*

From lawlessness…   **…to justice and order**

Tucson Citizen photo via Arizona Historical Society / Arizona Daily Star Tucscon.com   *Chris Ryan / iStock.com*

From exclusion…   **…to opportunity**

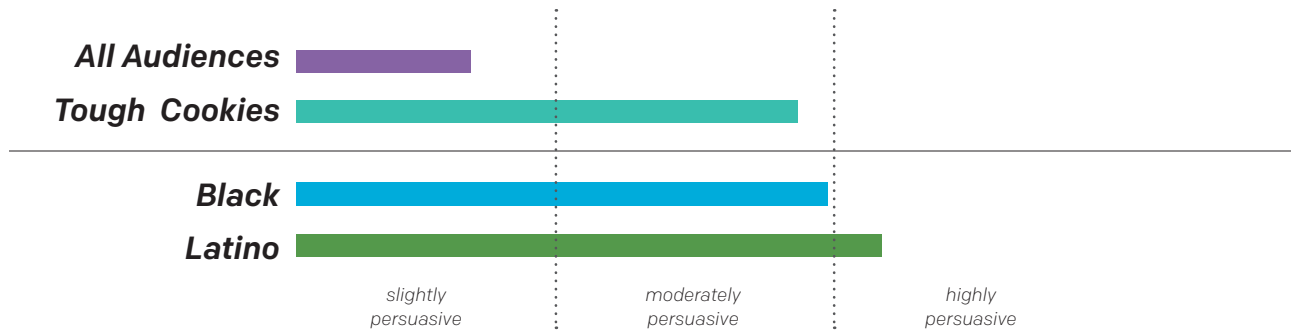*Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture*   *Hulton Deutsch / Corbis Premium Historical via Getty Images*

With so much talk of immigration and diversity, it can feel like America is changing–for the worse. History shows that change has made our lives easier, safer and freer. Change might feel strange now, but in 50 years, we might just be glad it happened.

How This Content Influenced Pro-Immigrant Support

This graph shows the measured increase in pro-immigrant support after viewing this content.

All Audiences		
Tough Cookies		
Black		
Latino		

slightly persuasive   *moderately persuasive*   *highly persuasive*

Politicians want us to think that immigrants will change America as we know it. That people like me, whose family has lived in the US since 1776, won't be considered truly American anymore.

Martin-dm / iStock.com

We're better than that. Whether we're Black, Brown, Asian or White, immigrant or US-born, we know that being American isn't about how you look, it's how you act: It's about treating others with respect, the freedom to do what you want in life, and working hard to go after your dreams. That was true in 1776, and it will be true in 2076, too.
I hope that by then, we can fix the immigration system. Instead of blaming immigrants for wanting to live the American dream, why not fix the rules so that they are straightforward and easy to follow, so people can come and go, and have the freedom to choose where their life would be best.


LightFieldStudios / iStock.com

This story includes language developed by the Race / Class Narrative Project, developed by Heather McGhee, Anat Shenker-Osorio, Ian Haney López, Lake Research Partners, Brilliant Corners, SEIU and Demos. Learn more about the Race / Class Narrative Project here.

How This Content Influenced Pro-Immigrant Support

This graph shows the measured change in pro-immigrant support after viewing this content. People Power and Tough Cookies' support increased, while AAPI, Latino, and Black audiences' support decreased.
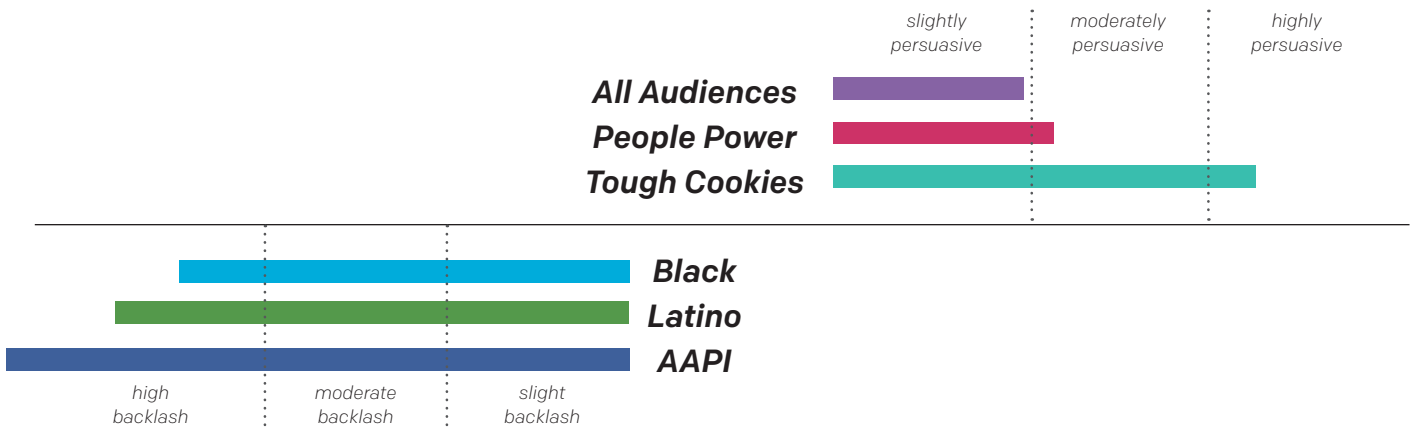
The Power of Presenting the Irresistible Future

Illustrating the future held great power for audiences, successfully moving them away from fear-based narratives and toward a pro-immigrant mindset. The level of movement among our most skeptical, cautious, and conservative audiences (Tough Cookies and Don't Tread on Me) was striking, ranging from a moderate to a very strong increase in pro-immigrant support compared to the baseline after viewing our content. [5]

Looking at the content that worked, here are the main elements that we believe contributed to their success with audiences:

- We illustrated how the pro-immigrant future benefits everyone: It is important to help audiences primed for zero-sum thinking, especially conservative audiences, grasp how the pro-immigrant future is better for them, too. Leaning into an abundant future was how we addressed their fear of scarcity. We described a world where everyone can win, using inclusive language like "everyone can…" or "imagine if you could…."

- We described the future without jargon: Painting a picture of the future in some detail worked best for audiences, though even subtle nods to the future worked well. The content that worked did not include conceptual words like "justice" or "equity", instead describing the tangible benefits of a future in which those things were true.

- We included hints of a structured, accessible immigration process as part of the future. In order to address fears of danger and chaos, we wanted to find ways of reassuring audiences that a future where everyone has the freedom to move could be safe, without validating their fears of "criminals" crossing the border or fears of "inundation". Content about the future did well when it included generalized references to "rules", "process" or "efficiency". We found success even against the opposition narrative by not mentioning systems directly, but describing the result of having an easy and efficient immigration process. [6]

To see what addressing the power of presenting the irresistible future looks like in action, on the following pages we show four examples of content that either focus entirely on the future or combine it with other storytelling elements.

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5   We want to note that content about the future alone didn't do as well once the Great Replacement Theory opposition narrative was introduced. Audiences needed their fear of change addressed in combination with a future vision in order to overcome that narrative.

6   Though this subtly implies a "legality" framework, we wonder if using it in the context of the future may offer a way to sidestep a "law and order" narrative by making it obsolete — that is, framing a future as one in which there's no need to overstay a visa or cross a desert because people are simply free to move here and the process is easy and straightforward. This is worth further experimentation to understand the benefits vs pitfalls.

A Story of the Future

People have always been on the move. Movement enabled us to progress, to grow, and to connect with each other across plains and oceans. But, as time moved forward, politicians, media, and businesses profited by making us afraid of people who were moving here from other places.

MilanMarkovic78 / Shutterstock.com

But then, just when the anxiety and finger pointing seemed to become too much, we decided fear was holding us back. We decided we were greater than fear.

We began in our own neighborhoods. We stopped and listened to one another. We realized we had much more in common than what divided us. We learned one another's traditions and celebrated them. We created opportunities for our communities and showed reverence for the wonders of nature. And we laughed and danced together.

klebercordeiro / iStock.com

Before long, this energy spread across the country and the globe. Systems became more inclusive, efficient, and fair. And as communities across the globe became more welcoming, the world became safer, too.

PopTika / Shutterstock.com

And back in our local communities, we were stronger, kinder, and more caring to one another. Life was better knowing there was always space for one more at the table.

DisobeyArt / Shutterstock.com

This Story of the Future was closely adapted from the video, UN Human Rights Vision for the World, from the Office of the High Commisioner for Human Rights.

How This Content Influenced Pro-Immigrant Support

This graph shows the measured increase in pro-immigrant support after viewing this content.

All Audiences

Tough Cookies

slightly persuasive   moderately persuasive   highly persuasive

If you could live anywhere in the world, where would you choose?

PopTika / Shutterstock.com

Imagine if our immigration system gave ALL OF US the freedom to choose where our lives would be best. We could work over the border in Canada. Have our friends from Mexico visit from dinner.

DisobeyArt / Shutterstock.com

Updating our antiquated immigration rules to be faster, smoother, and available to more than just the rich would give all of us more freedom.

Dmitry Molchanov / Shutterstock.com

How This Content Influenced Pro-Immigrant Support

This graph shows the measured increase in pro-immigrant support after viewing this content.

All Audiences

Tough Cookies

slightly persuasive   moderately persuasive   highly persuasive

Imagine if immigration worked like an airport.

Bloomberg / Bloomberg via Getty Images

If security lines were run efficiently and smoothly with people safely arriving and leaving.
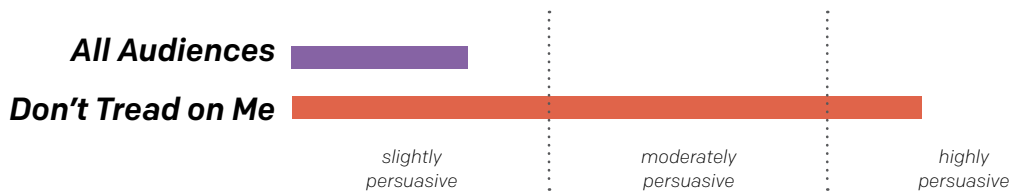

vm / iStock.com

Imagine if we all could choose to live where our life would be best.

fizkes / iStock.com

How This Content Influenced Pro-Immigrant Support

This graph shows the measured increase in pro-immigrant support after viewing this content.

All Audiences

Don't Tread on Me

slightly persuasive   moderately persuasive   highly persuasive

The world around us has changed a lot and our communities are changing with it.

But one thing stays the same - we're all a part of the American family.

sirtravelalot / Shutterstock.com*

Imagine in 50 years people can easily travel in and out of the country.

PopTika / Shutterstock.com

We know who is coming in and out of the country because the freedom to move is available to everyone.

Evgenia Parajanian / Shutterstock.com

New arrivals are welcomed into communities and we all have friends from many different places. If we want to move to another country, we can.
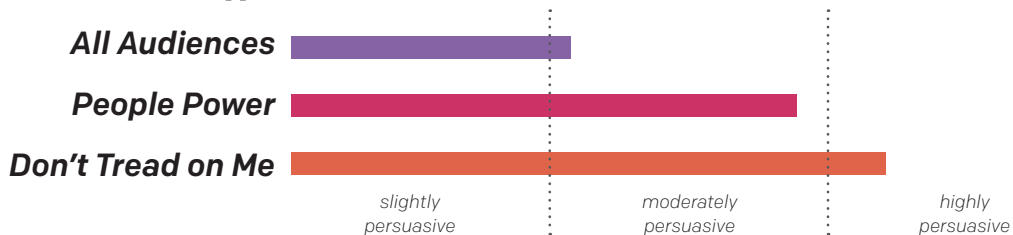
We all thrive - those of us who were born here and those of us who moved here from other countries.

Dmitry Molchanov / Shutterstock.com

*Due to due to copyright issues, we cannot publish the original image we tested, which featured a crowd of Latinx children cheering and waving American flags.

How This Content Influenced Pro-Immigrant Support

We tested the content above against opposition content featuring the Great Replacement Theory and immigrant "inundation" narratives. This graph shows the measured increase in pro-immigrant support after viewing both this content and the opposition content.

All Audiences		
People Power		
Don't Tread on Me		
slightly persuasive	moderately persuasive	highly persuasive

Portal to the Pro-Immigrant Future

IN ALL OF OUR STORYTELLING ABOUT THE FUTURE, we describe a pro-immigrant, pluralist future where freedom of movement is the norm and everyone can thrive. But while every audience segment is on board with a future where people have the freedom to move and thrive, how they get to that future is different.

Justice-oriented base audiences (People Power) are the only ones who will explicitly embrace pluralism. For more order- and authority-focused audiences (Tough Cookies and Don't Tread On Me), their support of the stories we presented did not grow from a desire for a pluralist future, but rather "a unified future". This future is one where diversity is okay because there is still a degree of sameness and unity - values are shared, people get along, assimilation is a measure of success, and everyone is rowing in the same direction.

Though there are important differences between the pluralist future we are moving toward and the unified future these audiences long for, they are not diametrically opposed. From our research, the broad desire for a unified future shares roots in three deep narratives that we in the Butterfly Lab have identified as key to a pluralist future: Abundance, Belonging, and Freedom to Thrive. We can think of these three shared deep narratives as a portal that creates the openings for a paradigm shift. Telling stories rooted in these narratives can move audiences closer to a pro-immigrant worldview.

Abundance

Audiences are experiencing fear and scarcity in their everyday lives right now and long for a future where that is not the norm. Abundance in a pro-immigrant, pluralist future is about living in a world where there can be enough for everyone if we live in alignment with the world around us. It's about practicing love, care, community, and regeneration. It's about centering mindsets of sufficiency and generosity.[7]

We don't need everyone to share an exact vision of a pluralist future to be able to realize it. Just imagining a better future is an act of abundance, and we believe there is potential in nurturing what appeals to each audience as we tell stories about the abundant future. Effective storytelling can help them imagine a world where diversity makes us strong, a world where there can be what organizer Linda Sarsour calls "unity without uniformity."

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7   From Butterfly Lab's *Narrative System for our Future*.

Belonging

Belonging in a pro-immigrant, pluralist future is about recognizing and respecting the diversity of our peoples and communities, acknowledging differences as invigorating and powerful assets, and welcoming each other. It's about seeing each other in our joys and struggles, calling each other into community, and making equity a central practice.[8]

It didn't take much to persuade audiences that immigrants belong in the U.S. But the continuing popularity of "good immigrant" stories tells us that many may have a way to go in embracing the complexity of immigrants. Our research showed that we don't need to bend our vision of the future according to what audiences seem ready to accept now. We saw persuasive power in sharing a vision of the future where we all belong.

> **In a pro-immigrant paradigm, our job is to show people how they belong and thrive in our pro-immigrant future.**

This is what addressing the fear of change is about at its heart — it's acknowledging people's fear of not belonging, and then showing them how their story is a valued part of our shared future.

Freedom to Thrive

Opposition narratives evoke a scarcity mindset to persuade people that we're in a zero-sum reality - that if immigrants thrive, then others will not. But we think building pro-immigrant support depends upon our ability to tell a story of how we all thrive.

Freedom to Thrive in a pro-immigrant, pluralist future is about all communities and cultures having equal agency to make decisions about their lives, relationships, communities, and futures. It's about all of us — in balance and alignment with our world — being able to pursue our dreams, engage in quality and fulfilling work, and live with joy, dignity, and love.[9] It's about having the freedom to move where our lives would be best, and being able to live our best lives there.

8   ibid.
9   ibid.

Future Directions For Research

BECAUSE WE CONDUCTED OUR RESEARCH against the backdrop of broad anti-immigrant and anti-immigration sentiment in the national political environment, we were heartened by the possibilities our research revealed. However, we know that much more work needs to be done. Here we suggest some future directions for further narrative research.

We need to create a meaningful narrative connection between immigrants and immigration.

Recent research from United We Dream and Harmony Labs revealed that most audiences are not viewing stories about immigrants at all, and most stories about immigration center politicians as the protagonists rather than immigrants themselves. The stories that audiences may see often reinforce harmful dominant narratives.

We know that telling stories connecting immigrants and the immigration process is what many advocates, activists, and artists do daily. We suspect that a basic lack of positive stories connecting immigrants to the immigration system make it difficult for these stories to get traction when they are out in the world.

To make more headway connecting these two things, we believe we need more testing, narrative experimentation, and investments in creating and disseminating a large volume of stories designed for and targeted to specific audiences that strongly connect immigrants and immigration.

The Great Replacement Theory is a powerful, existential threat. We need to learn more about how to neutralize the perception that diversity is threatening.

The dominant narratives around immigrants and immigration are rooted in zero-sum thinking, white supremacy, and racism. The Great Replacement Theory is a conspiracy-based narrative that positions pro-immigrant policies as part of a plot to use immigrant voters to diminish the political power of White people. It represents an extreme distillation of all of these toxic modes of thinking, combining narratives of immigrant inundation, inferiority, and criminality. When we used Fox News content advancing the Great Replacement Theory as the opposition narrative, we saw again and again how much it moved audiences away from a pro-immigrant mindset. To overcome these opposition narratives, we linked three story elements together: taking audiences on a journey that addressed their fear of change, offering reassurance that the

immigration process can be smoother, and describing an abundant future that is welcoming, pluralistic, and free. We found that when we did so, we were able to win all audience segments back to pro-immigrant and pro-immigration positions.

When we removed The Great Replacement Theory content, linking these story elements became less important. For Tough Cookies, people who value continuity and value family, acknowledging their fear of change alone was enough to overcome the opposition message. Content about the future fared positively, as did personal stories of immigrants.

The Great Replacement Theory may hold salience because it is a narrative of the future. We know we need to offer a different, better future for all. We know that some audiences will never value diversity for diversity's sake, and may even fear it. But our research suggests that despite this, we may be able to win audiences over to our side by sharing a vision of a future where they, too, belong. We recommend more testing to explore other ways of neutralizing the notion that diversity is a threat to the future.

Audiences are primed for the "good immigrant" trope. We need to learn more about how to move audiences beyond the good/bad immigrant binary.

Our stories of immigrants were also designed to test something else: the limits of the "good immigrant" trope. We featured immigrants who worked hard in both working-class and professional-class jobs; who assimilated by dancing to country music; and who married into a White American family. Good immigrant stories were consistently among the best-performing types of content across all of our audiences, and we found that audiences could support even Black and Muslim characters who played "good immigrant" roles. But when we named that one of the characters was undocumented, support disappeared.

These findings reinforce what many in the movement have known for a long time: immigrants are acceptable as long as they are assimilated and "non-threatening". They also show how this trope is a dead end and won't move our movement past the current status quo.

Our research points to the need for what the writer Viet Thanh Nguyen calls "narrative plenitude": more, truthful stories told by immigrants that move the norms away from the "good"/"bad" binary, where characters experience the joy, pain and love consistent with being human, where they are allowed to make mistakes and still be accepted.[10] As an example, the Black Lives Matter movement has led to a sea change in less than a decade toward more and truer representation. We need additional exploration and investment to achieve that narrative plenitude and to set cultural norms that acknowledge the breadth of immigrants' humanity.

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10 See the Chrysalis Lab findings for additional experimentation and learnings around narrative plenitude.

Conclusion

> **If you only take one thing away from this report, take this: storytelling about the future paves the way to the future.**

We don't need to compromise our vision, we need to share it. By acknowledging audiences' fears of change, taking them on a journey that ends in a better vision for a shared future, and staying true to the deep narratives we need to advance, we know we can move some of even the most resistant audiences. A pro-immigrant majority is ready for us to organize and activate. Our work ahead is clear.

It has been our greatest honor and pleasure to serve the pro-immigrant movement. We believe in what we are building together and hope that this research offers something you can use to move your important work forward.

Appendix 1: Research Methodology

OUR RESEARCH THIS YEAR involved two phases: qualitative research conducted in partnership with the Opportunity Agenda in the summer of 2022 and content testing based on those findings. We chose to focus on unlocking a pro-immigrant mindset among stretch audiences because we believe this is a prerequisite for a sustained, long-term attitudinal shift among a majority of the population that can ultimately lead to support for policy change.

We define stretch audiences as those who are skeptical or not yet supportive of immigration reform or immigrants. Our stretch audiences can include conservatives who value safety and authority; older liberals, moderates and conservatives who fear change and put family first; younger liberals who value structure but take a fatalistic approach to the state of society and would more likely be found at a party than a protest; and liberals who value community and believe coming together can solve problems, but are easily swayed by harmful dominant narratives about immigrants.

No research process can answer every question, especially for a space as vast and important as the immigrant justice movement. Our goal was to identify concepts or ideas that could be layered onto many types of stories the movement is already telling, or wants to tell, to strengthen their efficacy with stretch audiences. As such, we didn't test specific policies; we didn't focus on messages or what to say; we didn't compare the effectiveness of delivery modes or messengers; and we didn't seek out a formula that advocates can apply to content in all situations. Our goal is not to offer specific instructions to the movement, but to contribute to a larger body of research that advocates, artists, organizers and others can expand upon as we continue to push for much-needed change.

For our qualitative process, we worked with Gretchen Barton of Worthy Strategy Group to interview 48 participants who were socio-demographically representative by race, income, age, and location and who lived in Michigan, Ohio, Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, Arizona, Western New Mexico, Upstate New York and Pennsylvania. We oversampled on Black, Latinx, and AAPI populations.

We wanted to learn what made participants feel more open to immigration, so we asked them to consider a fictional scenario (inspired by an existing reality, the European Union): a future world in which North, Central, and South America operated as a "free movement zone," where people could safely travel across borders for work, travel, and even to live. Then, through a

careful multivalent process that included multiple interviews, we solicited metaphorical images through which interviewees could explain their feelings and thoughts about immigrants and immigration. This process uses best practices from the world of psychology and neuroscience in order to give participants the time and the space to share what matters most to them in an unfiltered manner.

Our qualitative research revealed opportunities to build a pro-immigrant mindset, but we needed to learn more about how to put them into action. Specifically, people dream of a better future and want a better immigration system, but fear often outweighs pro-immigrant values. Structure, order and safety rose to the top as areas to investigate further.

In the fall of 2022, we translated the qualitative research findings into 58 lo-fi concepts, iterating across three rounds of testing. All of our concepts included images and text formed into brief stories about immigrants or immigration that addressed the elements we hoped to test. We included stories sourced from the immigrant justice movement, submitted by United We Dream, the Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project, Unbound Philanthropy, ASO Communications, and Rachel van Geenhoven of Worksafe, as well as stories sourced from Intelligent Mischief, the Ultimate Messaging Guide to Winning the Immigration Narrative report [11], the #StandUp4Migrants campaign[12], the UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, the Greater Than Fear campaign[13], and Anat Shenker-Osorio's *Words to Win By* podcast. Riki Conrey of Harmony Labs and Milan de Vries offered extensive support throughout our test planning, content creation and question selection process.

We used the Grow Progress Rapid Message Testing platform to survey real people across the United States, balanced on demographics. Then, the efficacy of our content was measured against a control, using statistical best practices to accurately weight populations, calculate statistical significance and account for small sample sizes. In total, we received 15,400 survey responses across 7 tests. Each piece of content was viewed by 200 people. Although we cannot guarantee that each response was unique across all tests, the survey platform does prevent duplicate responders in each test. Survey results were also matched to the Narrative Observatory audiences using raw data from Grow Progress, thanks to the teams at Grow Progress and Harmony Labs.

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11   The guide was stewarded by the California Immigrant Policy Center and America's Voice, and led by leaders from those organizations as well as from United We Dream, Immigration Hub, ACLU Colorado, and Somos Votantes.

12   The #StandUp4Migrants campaign is out of the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. More information here: **https://standup4humanrights.org/en/**

13   The Greater Than Fear campaign was co-led by ASO Communications, Uprise, Education Minnesota, Faith in Minnesota, and SEIU Minnesota. More info here: **https://greaterthanfear.us/**

We based our concepts' success on audience movement across three questions:

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: All immigrants, including undocumented immigrants, have a place here and belong in America.

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: We should expand the ability for people inside and outside the US to move freely even if that means that more immigrants move to my neighborhood.

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I can personally imagine a future in which moving between countries is as straightforward as getting a driver's license.

Riki Conrey of Harmony Labs provided additional statistical support using the raw data from Grow Progress to compare content between tests, and to calculate performance across all questions, combined. We present estimates of the degree of concept persuasiveness for certain subgroups. The labels "slightly", "moderately", and "highly" persuasive reflect the concepts' effectiveness relative to the other concepts we tested. Most (about 70%) concepts with a significant impact were just "slightly" persuasive across all audiences. The next 20% of persuasive concepts moved audiences toward the target narrative more; we call these "moderately" persuasive. The top 10% of content moved the overall audience the most; these most effective content were "highly" persuasive.

Appendix 2: Research Acknowledgements

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