



Economic Democracy Handout

To accompany the [Solutions Journalism Network](#) webinar on May 25, 2023
YouTube recording [here](#).

The crises of climate change, sustainability, economic equity, and racial justice raise the stakes for both democracy and journalism. Addressing these challenges requires structural changes and solutions that rethink our approach to economic development. Economic democracy projects are rooted in the idea that those closest to a problem or decision are best equipped to define solutions. Because of this, solution journalism is a natural fit for telling economic democracy stories.

What is Economic Democracy?

Economic democracy is a framework for (re)organizing economic and social life around principles of **cooperation, solidarity, democracy, and sustainability** for greater collective well-being.

Economic Democracy projects attempt to increase the amount of control held by workers or community members to improve conditions on the job or in a specific geographic area and to create access to more resources, wealth, or opportunity. To do this, organizers of economic democracy projects use **democratic ownership models and decision-making processes** that are designed to expand control over high-impact (often financial) decisions.

Reporting at the Intersection of Labor, Economy, and Democracy with Solutions Journalism

Stories about economic democracy projects are often overlooked by editorial agendas because they do not fall easily into one category or beat. Learning to recognize solutions at the intersection of labor, economy and democracy not only helps surface these important stories but also plays a critical role in challenging the public's ideas about the systems operating in the background of society and what alternatives are possible.

Examples of Economic Democracy Solutions

A wide variety of projects can fall under the umbrella of economic democracy and are community responses to systemic issues. Below are some examples.

Cooperative Labor, Production and Distribution

- [Co-ops are democratizing the food chain](#) by Jaisal Noor
- [Power to the People: Could New Orleans take control of its power utility?](#) by Kalyee Pochee, Gambit
- [How a majority BIPOC worker co-op is disrupting the field of therapy](#) by Sydney Pereira, Prism
- [An Appalachian model for building place-based community wealth](#) by Frances Nguyen, Prism and Next City
- [The Coworking Space Putting Black Moms' Startup Dreams First](#) by Oscar Perry Abello, Next City

Cooperative Housing Solutions

- [Welcome Home](#) by Emma Athena, Boulder Weekly
- [This Community-Controlled Real Estate Co-Op Is Proving Its Value](#) by Oscar Perry Abello, Next City
- [The great experiment—Can resident-owned mobile home parks save manufactured housing communities?](#) By Angela K. Evans Boulder Weekly
- [A Worker Cooperative and a Community Land Trust Bought a Building Together](#) by Oscar Perry Abello, Next City
- [Portland group works to make wealth redistribution a reality through real estate](#) by Tiffany Camdi, Oregon Public Radio
- [After Centuries of Housing Racism, a Southern City Gets Innovative](#) by Adam Lynch, Yes!

Participatory Budgeting & Planning

- [This High School Gave Spending Power to Students](#) by Asher Lehrer-Small, Reasons to Be Cheerful
- [How New York Is Giving Residents A Voice In The City Budget](#) by Emily Nonko, Next City
- [Chicago Youth Help Decide Where Public Funds Go](#) by Martín Xavi Macías, Next City
- [Queens pols unveil winning participatory budgeting projects](#) by Ryan Schwach, Queens Daily Eagle
- [Organizers Behind Bronx Wide Plan Now Building a Movement Behind It](#) by Oscar Perry Abello, Next City
- [Aloha 'Aina and Evolving a Circular Economy](#) by Noe Tanigawa, Hawaii Public Radio

Local Currencies (no, it's not bitcoin)

- [Short on Money, Cities Around the World Try Making Their Own](#) by Peter Yeung, Bloomberg CityLab
- [Forget U.S. dollars, the Hudson Valley has its own currency](#) by Cloey Callahan
- [Time Banking: A Community Path to Addressing Social Exclusion](#) by Krista Wyatt and Kathy Perlow, Nonprofit Quarterly

Cooperation & Democracy in Journalism

- [The push toward a four-day workweek is gaining momentum](#) and [Prism adopts a four-day workweek](#) by Prism
- [CHEK Changed the Channel and Put Workers in Charge](#) by Abdullah Shhipar, The Tyee
- [The Urgent Need For Worker-Owned Media](#) by Nathan J. Robinson, Current Affairs
- [Charlotte Journalism Collaborative](#)

Learn more about Economic Democracy

A wide variety of organizations can offer data, research and sources to use in your economic democracy reporting. Below are some ideas to get you started.

National Cooperative Business Alliance - <https://ncbaclusa.coop/resources/co-op-sectors/>

Sustainable Economies Law Center - <https://www.theselc.org/>

Ownership Matters - <https://ownershipmatters.net>

Grassroots Economic Organizing (GEO) - <https://geo.coop/>

Democracy at Work Institute - <https://institute.coop/>

U.S. Federation of Worker Cooperatives - <https://www.usworker.coop/en/>

Seed Commons - <https://seedcommons.org/>

Shared Capital Cooperative - <https://sharedcapital.coop>

National Cooperative Bank - <https://ncb.coop>

Democracy Collaborative - <https://democracycollaborative.org/>

Public Banking Institute - <https://publicbankinginstitute.org/>

Participatory Budgeting Project - <https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/>

Democracy Beyond Elections - <https://www.democracybeyondelections.org/>

Grounded Solutions (national network for community land trusts) -

<https://groundedsolutions.org/>

Inclusiv (national trade association for community development credit unions) -

<https://inclusiv.org/>

National Credit Union Administration - <https://mapping.ncu.gov/ResearchCreditUnion>

New Economy Coalition - <https://neweconomy.net/>

Project Equity - <https://project-equity.org/>