

# The University of Denver Interdisciplinary Institute for Democracy

## Ideas to Impact White Paper

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### I. Introduction and Overview

Democracy has come under a range of pressures and threats around the world. Globally, an anti-democratic populist wave continues to surge, while the institutional deficits to address our most troubling collective challenges — most centrally climate change — have been laid bare. In the United States, political radicalization and social polarization have undermined trust in democratic institutions and made society ever more vulnerable to widespread mis- and disinformation. Civil discourse and civic mindedness have suffered at even the most local levels under these pressures, as witnessed during the Covid-19 pandemic. The challenge before us is to reimagine and rebuild democracy, from the global to the local levels, for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The **University of Denver’s Interdisciplinary Institute for Democracy** takes on the challenge of democratic renewal. It does so through a concerted commitment to improving our collective ability to understand and address the challenges to democracy both at home and abroad. Recognizing that democracy requires a range of supportive attitudes, practices, and institutions to successfully serve the diverse communities it governs, the Institute will support innovative interdisciplinary research, education, and public engagement centered around two major interrelated themes:

1. **Civic identity and citizenship:** focused on cultivating the next generation of civically-engaged, public service-oriented leaders through the advancement of civil discourse, leadership, and political efficacy (i.e. organizing, activism, and communication).
2. **Democratic institutional renewal:** focused on understanding and effective models of democratic governance capable of addressing complex public policy challenges from local to global levels.

The University-wide Institute is well-positioned to marshal existing centers and substantive expertise across the faculty as a foundation for creating a truly interdisciplinary, cross-campus, and equitable initiative that will serve a broad range of University aims. The Institute will knit together the range of democracy-related work at the University of Denver to develop complementary linkages between them and amplify their collective impact and reach. Centered on the two core themes of civic identity and citizenship and democratic institutional renewal, the Institute will manifest a “local-to-global” perspective across its programs. It thus stands to offer substantive research and public engagement of critical importance both within the United States and abroad. Embedded in this approach is a cross-cutting emphasis on how Colorado can learn from other contexts and how, in its evolving political make-up — and as a destination for people seeking improved economic opportunities and well-being — Colorado can serve as a laboratory for effective citizenship and governance approaches for other communities across the world.

The Institute will advance these aims through a range of educational, research, and public engagement activities. Its educational programming will provide new curricular and research opportunities to

students and faculty alike, including, for example, a new interdisciplinary Democracy Studies certificate program for undergraduate students. It will also establish DU as host of a “Democracy Quarter” program that brings together students from across the world for an intensive and immersive democracy-focused educational and networking program. The Institute will establish DU’s reputation as a leading producer of knowledge by supporting a multi-pronged fellowship program that incentivizes DU and external faculty, as well as graduate and undergraduate students, to engage in democracy-focused research, teaching, and public events. The Institute will also serve as a focal point for connecting and amplifying the significant range of democracy-related public engagement already underway across DU, enhancing the University’s ability to deliver on the public good and burnishing its reputation for doing so.

The next two sections of this white paper further discuss the two core themes of civic identity and citizenship and democratic institutional renewal respectively, identifying existing DU activities related to each theme and describing how the Institute would build on and amplify the impact of these activities. Section 4 outlines new programs and activities that will be supported by the Institute. Section 5 discusses the Institute’s contributions to core DU values and priorities including enhancing the 4D experience, advancing DEI principles, and contributing to the public good. Section 6 outlines potential structures for the Institute along with a set of guiding principles for coordination across academic units and Institute governance. The final section discusses the Institute’s ability to attract resources and to sustain itself over time.

## **II. Core Theme #1: Civic Identity and Citizenship**

Democracy requires informed, active, and civic-minded participants to generate sustainable, community-oriented solutions to a range of complex governance challenges. The Institute’s focus on civic identity and citizenship aims to cultivate DU students’ capacities to co-create solutions to collective problems through the development of skills and practices that advance civic dialogue, ingenuity, and action. Specifically, the Institute will build on DU’s existing programs that deepen understanding and empathy toward fellow citizens, promote civil discourse, facilitate community engagement, promote informational and media literacy, and cultivate civic leadership and political efficacy. DU has already made a commitment via the 4D experience to cultivating in students the values of citizenship and civic duty as they pursue public-minded lives and careers of purpose. Faculty from across the university offer courses and engage in research that advance these objectives.<sup>1</sup> The University has also supported a range of impactful activities in these areas including (but not limited to) the Center for Community Engagement to Advance Scholarship and Learning, the Leadership Studies Program, the Inclusive Global Leadership Initiative, and various civil discourse programs that aim to foster inclusion and participation while also making room for a wide range of ideas, experiences, and perspectives.

Within the theme of civic identity and citizenship, the Institute will build on existing strengths by supporting programs that link together these activities in three main areas: leadership for the public good, political efficacy, and civil discourse.

**Leadership for the Public Good:** A civically engaged education plays a crucial role in inspiring and preparing the next generation of leaders who can safeguard and enhance our democracy. The Institute will solidify DU’s position as a global innovator in leadership education. The Institute will support, expand, and bridge the successful existing curricular and co-curricular programs across the university

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<sup>1</sup> We had insufficient time to assemble a full list of DU courses, research, and other programs related to civic identity and citizenship — but the campus houses many such activities on which future programs will build.

geared toward public leadership development (described below), while also supporting faculty research that informs and strengthens these programs.

- The DU Grand Challenges (DUGC) university-wide initiative, run by the Center for Community Engagement to advance Scholarship and Learning (CCESL), supports students in the development of their identity as a public good scholar through the **DUGC Student Scholars program**. This program enables undergraduate students to learn more about the social justice issues that matter to them, how to apply their academic learning to those issues, and develop concrete skills and tools for making change in partnership with communities.
- DU's **Leadership Studies Program** offers an immersive 24-credit academic minor that equips students to become inclusive community change makers who strive for a more equitable and just world. The curriculum prepares students for effective civic participation and leadership, with the necessary skills in critical thinking, self-discovery and identity development, human design thinking, collaboration, conflict resolution, and cultural competence.
- DU is poised to initiate a **Public Service Internship program** to enhance students' civic identity development and provide them with valuable work experience through public sector service. The internships connect students with opportunities in municipal, county, state, and federal government agencies, with placements designed to enhance students' understanding of the importance of public service, community problem-solving, and government decision-making.

**Political Efficacy:** Individuals are more likely to engage in politics and public life when they feel a sense of efficacy associated with their actions. Today's political environments, characterized by worsening polarization, seemingly intractable policy and governing challenges, mis- and disinformation penetrating both traditional and social media platforms, and the increasing concentration of political and economic power held by privileged elites, undermines this sense of efficacy, especially for younger populations. The Institute will support the expansion of existing and planned programs aimed to enhance students' sense of political efficacy, including:

- The Institute would coordinate several efforts to examine political efficacy via the Center on American Politics (CAP). CAP would lead a program to conduct a broad, nationally representative survey of college students to understand students' attitudes and expectations toward democracy and their own ability to affect political outcomes. Beyond this, CAP would coordinate with other campus partners in cataloging past efforts to protect democracy from threats within the US and elsewhere to better understand what sorts of approaches have been most effective.
- The University of Denver is home to the curricular initiative titled *Youth Voices in El Movimiento*, which introduces undergraduate students to the ways that El Movimiento, the Chicano movement for citizen rights, has unfolded in the Rocky Mountain West over the past 50 years. This program aims to introduce 12 new courses over the next two academic years in History, Anthropology, Sociology, Spanish Languages and Literatures, and Media, Film and Journalism Studies. DU students will be able to take courses that immerse them in archives and involve them in collecting oral histories with those who had been involved as young people in significant movements for democratic engagement. This project will result in resources for Denver Public Schools, seeking to fulfill the HB 1192 mission to support the "inclusion of matters relating to American Minorities in the teaching of social contributions in history and civil government in public schools."

- The Institute will further advance political efficacy by supporting connections between DU students and global democracy leaders, such as those who visit the Korbel School as part of its Denver Democracy Summit and the Sie Center’s International Global Leadership Initiative.

**Civil Discourse:** An integral part of the University of Denver’s work on democracy comes in the form of a range of initiatives on civil discourse. Each of these initiatives represents a distinct attempt to strengthen civic culture in our community and to thereby contribute to stanching the detrimental impact that a refusal to engage in civic dialogue and the tendency to retreat instead into polarized echo chambers has on the state of our democracy. Our collective work on civil discourse rests on the conviction that healthy democracy requires that while we may disagree vehemently about what is to be done on the collective challenges that face us, we understand that disagreement is inevitable and embrace the exchange of ideas necessary to keep the system working. We recognize, however, that civil discourse need not be genteel; and that appeals to civility can be used to narrow debate and to silence worthwhile protest and dissent. Our overarching goal is to make space to hear all voices, in the interest of vigorous, robust, and respectful civic exchange.

The suite of civil discourse-related activities already underway at the University of Denver will comprise one pillar of the civic identity and citizenship program. The Institute will enhance the work associated with each of these components and, crucially, help to draw linkages across this work in order to measure and advance University-wide outcomes related to civil discourse. Ongoing work under this pillar includes:

- The **global-to-local civil discourse initiative** housed at the Scrivner Institute and the Korbel School comprises three series that aim to foster civil discourse in the public policy realm. The Denver Dialogues series is a partnership with four premier U.S. think tanks — the American Enterprise Institute (or AEI), the Aspen Institute, the Hoover Institution, and New America — that is dedicated to engaging in and modelling civil discourse about major issues facing our nation and our world. The Colorado Project, launching later in 2023, will convene civic, political, and private sector leaders from around the state and region to focus intently on a core series of locally salient public policy challenges. And the Scrivner Policy Roundtable is a quarterly event series that fosters a collaborative research and learning network among local Denver Metro policy actors and organizations, allowing a space for them to learn from each other’s work and share substantive dialogue about local issues.
- The **debate across the curriculum initiative** works via the undergraduate classroom and in partnership with Braver Angels, a national nonprofit organization committed to defusing affective polarization, to increase our students’ skills in civic dialogue and debate while promoting reflection on the demands of civil discourse in a deeply pluralistic polity. Importantly, these debates are framed and pursued not as competitions but as collective search for truth. One core premise of this approach is that — as we know from decades of research — direct, active participation leads to lasting attitudinal and behavioral shifts in ways that passive engagement does not. Classroom debate has a proven track record for fostering critical thinking, moral development, and the skills and dispositions necessary for civil engagement.
- The **belonging and expression initiative** offers a prototype framework for exploring the intersections of belonging, diversity, equity and inclusion, identity, intersectionality, and free expression, alongside a wide range of other important values associated with each. Developed as a partnership between the Faculty Senate’s Freedom of Expression committee and the Undergraduate Student Government, the project provides individuals and groups—including across a range of

curricular and co-curricular spaces—a toolkit of shared vocabulary and short exercises for exploring some of the insurmountable tensions that will arise in any civic space characterized by intersectional identities and divergent positionalities in a context that places strong value on civil rights, freedom of religion, freedom of expression, and social justice.

**Assessing What Works in University-Level Civic Education:** As DU expands and develops democracy-oriented educational programs, there is an opportunity to advance knowledge on the effectiveness of these programs for shaping attitudes and behavior toward fellow citizens, civic participation, public service, and leadership. Other universities along the Front Range and across the country are undertaking related work in this area, via different models and with different communities, stakeholders, and goals in mind. DU has the opportunity to play a leadership role in forming a higher education collaborative that collects and shares knowledge about approaches and outcomes related to these efforts.

### **III. Core Theme #2: Democratic Institutional Renewal**

The impact of engaged citizens is ultimately limited if democratic institutions lack strength or do not function as intended. In many countries around the world, including the United States, democratic institutions have come under assault from both political elites and grassroots populist movements. The renewal and fortification of democratic institutions requires broad yet rigorous analysis of institutional behaviors, noting successes and failures across the world’s democratic communities; a deeper understanding of the impacts of technology and media/information ecosystems on democratic institutions; attention to the everyday social context — including everyday beliefs and practices — that support or undermine democratic institutions; and consideration of the extent to which democratic institutions can address complex policy challenges such as climate change, social division, and economic inequality.

DU already possesses a strong foundation on which to build new and strengthened programs focused on democratic institutional renewal. The primary campus divisions involved include the Josef Korbel School of International Studies (Korbel), the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS), and the Sturm College of Law. Within CAHSS, the Department of Political Science has an especially high concentration of faculty invested in the theme of democratic institutional renewal, including dedicated courses on domestic and international political institutions and an established partnership with the Democratic Erosion Consortium based at Brown University. Faculty in History, Communications, Philosophy, and Religious Studies also teach courses and conduct research related to this theme. There are also a number of existing centers and programs, primarily at the Korbel School, that relate to this theme, including the Center on American Politics at the Scrivner Institute, the Climate and Democracy Program, the Pardee Center for International Futures, the Sie Center, the Institute for Comparative and Regional Studies, the Colorado Project, and the Denver Democracy Summit. At the Law School, the Constitutional Rights and Remedies Program, the Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute, and the Vanda Center for International Law are also engaged in democracy-related activities.

The Institute will establish DU as a hub for cutting-edge research on democratic institutions across time and space — and provide programs through which the knowledge created by DU faculty research can be used a basis for educational and public outreach programs that equip students with the knowledge and tools required to reinvigorate and strengthen democratic institutions. The Institute will aim to provide a nuanced, interdisciplinary, and comparative examination of democratic institutional behavior. To do this, we propose to marshal existing faculty expertise to compare democratic institutional functioning across place (local, national, and international), time (shorter term and longer historic scopes),

institutions (formal and informal), and professional fields (formal state and non-state actors), noting how larger contextual factors (e.g. technological, economic, and demographic changes) affect the behavior of actors at all levels and thus the outcomes that are produced. Specific areas of concentration around democratic institutional renewal are proposed in the following areas:

**Colorado as a laboratory** for effective institutional and governance approaches for other communities across the world. The Institute will support a range of Colorado-focused activities from across academic units with the aim of developing integrated insights into Colorado's historical and contemporary path toward becoming a state with notable policy achievements and innovations in democracy. For example, the Institute would develop joint programming around the following existing or planned activities that, collectively, would provide a holistic view of democratic governance in Colorado for both DU and broader Colorado communities:

- The History faculty's engagement with the State Historians Council, which as part of History Colorado seeks to broaden the reach for western and Colorado history, and promotion of historical work that speaks to the present state of democracy in Colorado and beyond.
- Understanding and promoting the resolution of conflicts among diverse populations, such as through the study of land use at the Sturm College of Law's Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute. Local government and land use concerns often are at the front lines of democracy, engage some of the most difficult conversations and heightened passions in the political process, and can challenge our assumptions about how democracy should work. States like Colorado can establish approaches that can bridge divides and create respect and civil discourse.
- The Colorado Project, convened by the Scrivner Institute of Public Policy, aims to facilitate a gathering where leaders from across the public, private, and civic spheres with a range of political perspectives can come together to promote shared democratic objectives for the future; and to build a good practice framework for convenings of community leaders that reduce polarization and improve democratic governance.
- Research on the state of democracy in Colorado in conjunction with the DU Democracy Dashboard project (see below). Where are Colorado's democratic strengths and weaknesses compared to other U.S. states? How can knowledge of democratic institutional renewal outside of Colorado inform local policy and institutional reform efforts?

**American Democratic Institutions:** DU has much to offer in terms of historical, religious, social, economic, cultural, philosophical, and political perspectives on American democracy. The Institute would support opportunities to integrate knowledge across these disciplines.

A core programmatic feature of this integration would be the **DU Democracy Dashboard (3D)**, administered through the Center on American Politics. The 3D initiative would track and catalogue the health of democratic institutions in the fifty American states and elsewhere. This initiative would involve training 15–20 undergraduate students each year to gather both quantitative and qualitative indicators of democratic health, including ease of voter participation, the quality of political journalism, accountability in elections, anti-democratic language in state party platforms, debate over party platforms, competition in party primaries, and more. Several postdoctoral scholars would help to oversee the training of the students and maintain the available data. The 3D would coordinate with faculty members who work on political maps, geographic information software, and those in Emergent Digital Practices to produce a compelling and accessible on-line dashboard that can be utilized by

journalists, students, scholars, and policymakers around the world. This information would inform reports, scholarship, and public events at the university.

The Institute's work on American democratic institutions would also involve significant internal and external outreach. Its core findings and insights would inform the civic identity and citizenship programs described above, as well as the international comparative and regional programs described below. Outside DU, the Institute's affiliated faculty and students would engage with the Center for Civic Engagement, which sponsors the "We the People" program in high schools that gives students taking AP Government the opportunity to dive deeply into constitutional questions, particularly those around governance, civil rights, and constitutional history. The Institute would support faculty involvement, helping these students understand problems ranging from the Constitutional Convention to issues of representation, speech, distribution of powers across time.

**Democratic Erosion & Renewal in Comparative Perspective:** Comparative analysis of democracy across the globe enhances understanding of current democratic challenges – and opportunities for resilience and renewal – both at home and abroad. Within the Korbel School and CAHSS, there are numerous faculty engaged in innovative research, education, and public outreach related to the state of democracy across the world. Recognizing that the renewal of democratic institutions represents a global challenge, the Institute would support a range of programs that would establish DU as a leading voice on democratic institutions around the world, including:

- As part of the **Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC)** – a partnership of researchers, students, policymakers, and practitioners from countries around the world who collaboratively marshal evidence and learning to address the crisis of democratic erosion and to increase opportunities for democratic resilience -- faculty in Political Science contribute to global efforts to enhance research and education on democratic backsliding. As participants in this program, University of Denver undergraduates contribute to democratic erosion research, attend international conferences on institutional dimensions of democratic erosion, and connect with other students studying these topics across the world. Institute support would enable DU to expand these programs, deepen connections to the DEC headquarters at Brown University, host conferences, and develop associated research programs and outreach.
- The Pardee Center at the Korbel school develops innovative **models of the future of inclusive governance** including work integrating socio-political indicators into models of shared socio-economic pathways that guide international climate policy. The Institute could support the Pardee Center's effort to integrate models of climate change, economic trajectories, socio-political instability and democracy to better understand threats to democracy across the world – and interventions that could halt or slow these threats.
- Also hosted at the Korbel School, the **Denver Democracy Summit** brings together academics, civil society leaders, and policymakers to reflect on the state of democracy in communities and countries across the world. With support from the Institute, the Democracy Summit could expand participation, incorporate faculty workshops, and connect to a larger breadth of DU's democracy-related research and programs.

**Professional Practices and Democracy:** In their professional training and capacities, how do lawyers, social workers, civil servants, educators, international/diplomatic workers, natural resource managers, and private sector actors support or hinder democracy and democratic institutions through the course of their work? This program will unite faculty and students across professional and academic programs at

DU to better understand the roles of different professions and actors in creating, sustaining, threatening, and changing democratic institutions and principles via the choices they make at multiple levels. Such work can cover a range of possible avenues, including, but not limited to investigating changes in the training provided, the various professional networks and institutions created, the resources accessible, and the rules and norms governing the professions implicated in fostering and sustaining democracy.

#### IV. Key Activities

The Institute will engage in a range of education, research, and public engagement activities around the themes outlined in previous sections. The core activities will include the following:

- **Interdisciplinary Certificate in Democracy Studies:** Create a “Democracy Studies” certificate/micro-credential available to students who take a minimum number of cross-listed Institute related seminars,
- An “**International Democracy Quarter**” hosted at DU for visiting students and professionals from across the world, the culmination of which is an International Student Summit, perhaps co-occurring with the Denver Democracy Summit.
- **Fellowship Programs:** The Institute would support several types of fellowship programs:
  - Create a rolling series of **internal**, two-year termed, Democracy Fellowships with half of the fellowships turning over each year, and the fellowship positions proportionally distributed across participating academic units.<sup>2</sup> The internal fellowships will include course buyouts, summer salary, up to \$20k in research funding, and paid research assistants. Faculty fellows will be required to teach one cross-listed seminar per year grounded in the fellow’s democracy-focused research project and to present their research in a [Democracy Seminar](#) open to DU faculty and students, as well as in a public-facing presentation.
  - Create a rolling series of **external** Democracy Fellowships for senior faculty or practitioner fellows with a requirement to teach one cross-listed seminar per year grounded in the fellow’s democracy-related research project to increase student benefit. The Fellowship would include up to \$50k match to one’s home institution salary, up to \$15k in research funding, and funding for paid research assistants. The Fellow would be required to present their research in a [Democracy Seminar](#) open to DU faculty and students and to give a public-facing presentation.
  - A **Junior Faculty Fellow** who would teach one cross-listed seminar per year grounded in the fellow’s democracy-related research project. The Junior Fellow would receive up to \$40k to match their home institution’s salary, up to \$15k in research funding, and funding for paid research assistants. The Junior Faculty Fellow would be required to present their research in a [Democracy Seminar](#) open to DU faculty and students and to give a public-facing presentation in.
  - **Postdoctoral Fellows, Predoctoral Fellows, and Student Fellows** who would contribute to faculty-led research programs, serve as mentors and leaders for student programming, and assist in the organization and execution of public engagement events. A subset of these fellowships would include “Democracy and Diversity Fellows” aimed at increasing the number of faculty who will further DU’s goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion by attracting and hiring candidates with outstanding scholarly records. The program would add needed faculty lines across the social

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<sup>2</sup> Proportionally distributed as defined as the number of fellowships roughly matching the number of faculty in each academic unit.



sciences and provide the opportunity for new courses and mentorship opportunities for our students in currently underrepresented areas.

- A **mini-grants program** to fund competitive research awards for faculty in any discipline who wish to engage with the Institute's themes.
- **Community and Public Engagement:** The Institute will serve as a locus for a robust program of community and public knowledge-sharing and engagement. A range of speaker series and public events will include: a Democracy Seminar, where Institute-affiliated faculty, fellows, and students will present and discuss their research; quarterly Institute-branded public events; regular community convenings; etc. The Denver Democracy Summit, convened annually by the Korbel School, would also be an important fixture on the Institute calendar.

## V. Broader Impacts

In addition to contributing to DU's reputation for excellence in civic education and democracy research, the Institute will have a range of secondary impacts across DU and beyond.

First, the Institute will enhance the 4D experience for DU students. DU has the opportunity via the 4D experience to develop a model for instilling in students the values of citizenship and other forms of democratic participation and giving them the tools to acquit their civic duties and pursue public-minded lives and careers of purpose. Also, the Institute will support new intellectual growth via cross-curricular educational programs and opportunities to participate in new research programs, in turn fostering opportunities to better understand the ways that civic interactions and political institutions shape individual and societal health and wellness.

Second, the Institute will enhance DU's commitment to the public good. Democracy has both intrinsic and instrumental value for the communities that adopt and maintain it. DU can offer a unique, neutral convening platform that connects scholarly approaches to the broader public realm, with an emphasis on empirical evidence and interdisciplinary frameworks. In doing so, DU has the opportunity to contribute to the public good via research, curriculum, and practice on democratic discourse and participation.

Third, robust democracy rests on the inclusion of diverse perspectives and lived experiences. DU has the opportunity to model a DEI-centered set of approaches to renewing and safeguarding democracy by incentivizing research on just, inclusive, and equitable democratic institutions and practices, and incorporating this research into educational and community programs. Cultivating these areas of excellence will help to make DU attractive to students, faculty, and staff who identify with groups that are under-represented in academia, thus enhancing compositional diversity.

## VI. Organizational Structure

The working group discussed two potential models of organization, outlined briefly here. In whatever form it takes, the Institute would embrace principles of inclusion and equity among its contributors, ensuring that faculty, staff, and students from across campus have the resources and support required for meaningful and effective engagement.

1. Create an umbrella organization to administer, raise funds, and coordinate activities between existing, and possible future, Democracy-related centers (e.g. Center on American Politics, etc.) and to administer the programs outlined above. Details should be determined later, but the top leadership

position would rotate between Korbel and CAHSS, and come with a 0-0-2 course load and Director stipend. The Institute design would serve multiple aims. In terms of scholarship, institutional disparities, and University reputation and standing, it would put all DU faculty on equal footing in terms of research support, teaching, and service obligations. Doing so would enable a broad range of DU faculty to advance their research and thus advance the Institute's and the University's mission, reputation, and status. The Institute would help to build campus-wide community and provide intellectual engagement for faculty across the University.

2. Develop a flatter organization in which the Institute's activities and linkages would be organized around two centers, each corresponding to a central Institute theme. The Center on Civic Identity and Citizenship, based in the College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences, would take the lead in developing and coordinating the civic identity and citizenship-focused programming described above. The Center for Democratic Institutional Renewal, based at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies, would administer the Institute's programming on democratic institutional renewal. Each Center would foster innovative interdisciplinary research, education, and public engagement, and each would provide a hub for collaborative work to build on the wide range of democracy related initiatives at the University of Denver to collectively establish DU as a leader in democratic studies. Each Center would include a faculty director, 2-4 staff members, and affiliated faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and students. The Governing Council of the Institute would include Deans of represented schools, the two Center directors, senior staff, and appointed affiliated faculty from across campus. The governing council would establish guiding principles for the execution of the Institute's activities, advise on strategic, programmatic, and administrative decisions, and offer hands-on support where needed.

## **VII. Resources & Sustainability**

Funding and sustainability of the Institute rests on a three-pronged approach. First, fundraising support from the DU Advancement Office will be essential for initial development of the Institute and to sustain the administrative structures for an initial period of around 5 years. Second, we envision that Institute leaders will pursue grants and private donations that support collaborative and interdisciplinary programming, with potential grant funding from philanthropic organizations with democracy-related grant programs such as the Ford Foundation, the Hewlett Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, the Proteus Fund, and the New Venture Fund. Third, individual faculty and staff within the Institute would pursue public or private funding for their own research and educational programs that form part of the Institute.

The integrated and networked nature of the Institute proposed here will contribute to the sustainability of the initiative. It makes it possible for DU to respond nimbly flexibly to new and emerging issues in the democracy space, connecting relevant DU units and their partners at the relevant time, while enabling work to ebb and flow adaptively.

The Institute's focus on interdisciplinary and experiential student-facing programs will attract student interest and support enrollments; we also anticipate that the Institute will attract student scholarship funding. The Institute's investment in and support of faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and students working on the themes of civic identity and democratic institutional renewal will establish DU as a leader in the higher education space and send a strong signal about its commitment to renewing democracy through innovative interdisciplinary research, education, and public engagement.