

REPRESENT  
**JUSTICE**

# Strategic Plan

2024-2026

**BUILDING NARRATIVE POWER, TOGETHER**



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# Executive Summary



## Firsthand experiences of the legal system have never been more critical to shaping public conversation.

Represent Justice was founded on the understanding that narrative power is essential to community power. We have demonstrated that authentic stories and solutions from those who have lived experience in the prison system cultivate empathy and increase public demand for policies that reduce harm and support community healing and transformation. Firsthand experiences shaping public conversation about the legal system has been essential to communities' hard-won political, legal, and cultural progress.

We also know that fear-based stories dehumanize people impacted by the legal system and perpetuate a cycle of incarceration that spurs investment in punishment, leading to extreme sentencing and mass incarceration. This is often at odds with what the general public actually

wants. For example, in cities like Atlanta, low-income residents identified access to housing, transportation, and affordable energy as key public safety priorities.<sup>1</sup> However, the plans for a \$90 million police training facility continue despite significant protest from members of the community.

As we witness the return of degrading “tough on crime” rhetoric, media and political discourse is increasingly ignoring the public health failures that threaten community safety, and public understanding of people impacted by the legal system is beginning to waver. The ability of advocates to measure and push back on harmful narratives with personal storytelling is perhaps more consequential than it has ever been. It is incumbent upon us to build lasting narrative

infrastructures to protect policy wins for the next generation and to keep the voices of people impacted by incarceration at the forefront, so that they are central to community conversations about investment, support, and healing.

Over the past three years, Represent Justice has used the power of storytelling to reach millions of people with firsthand stories about the legal system, generating hundreds of thousands of advocacy actions, building out an engaged audience of over 180,000 supporters, and building up the visibility and influence of dozens of system-impacted movement leaders. Our award-winning film campaigns and distribution strategies have mobilized the demand of new audiences across the country and are sparking conversation and action to end mass incarceration.

Our network of Ambassadors and film participants has grown to a vibrant, supportive group of people impacted by the system looking to connect to new audiences, share their stories, and grow their narrative power in the field of legal system reform.

This network is a testament to our commitment to building a lasting narrative infrastructure that values and elevates the experiences of leaders in the justice movement. In the coming years, we will expand this ecosystem, adding new opportunities to amplify and reinforce new narratives as we support storytellers on the ground in different states in the form of impact campaigns.

*Represent Justice has uplifted stories centered on youth justice and gender-inclusive justice, raising awareness around the school-to-prison pipeline, the foster-care-to-prison pipeline, and the importance of healing through the arts.*

Represent Justice has uplifted stories centered on youth justice and gender-inclusive justice, raising awareness around the school-to-prison pipeline, the foster-care-to-prison pipeline, and the importance of healing through the arts. Our impact campaigns are aimed at the healing and redemption of folks who are system-impacted, while also supporting policies that end the structural inequities that drive mass incarceration and

that drastically reduce the prison population. Over the course of our strategic plan, we will expand our focus to include more stories about alternatives to incarceration—such as the importance of substance abuse treatment and mental health support—and stories of expanding opportunities for those impacted by the system—such as the right to vote and access to fair employment and housing.

## INSIDE THE PLAN

# What's New

- ▶ Expanded creative and technical skills training for Ambassadors and Film Participants
- ▶ Film Campaign support for Ambassador story projects
- ▶ Expanded geographic and narrative priorities
- ▶ New community storytelling program
- ▶ Launch of Speakers Bureau
- ▶ New measurement framework: Results Based Accountability

On the Films and Series side, we are influencing the sector of impact media by focusing on national film campaigns helmed by system-impacted people and leveraging national film distribution as a way to engage new audiences with the continued work of film subjects. We will also use our Films and Series strategy to help deploy impactful Ambassador Program distribution strategies.

Represent Justice has emerged as one of the leading storytelling organizations in the country, inspiring new and creative storytelling campaigns and festivals and innovating frameworks for measuring narrative power and lasting narrative change. The vision for our work and design of our programs going forward signify the maturation of what we have built and grown into for several years, collaboration between programs being a key element of our scale and success. Over the course of the next three years, Represent Justice will focus on our developed, cross-program strengths of audience mobilization around firsthand stories, film and media distribution, and capacity-building.

*“Represent Justice lives beyond the narrative change. They speak from a place we need to go. They believe it, they show it, and they show up. They hold space for what is possible, so they’re able to communicate about what’s possible. They draw in the stories that can convert almost anyone, from any walk of life, immediately, because of the level of articulation, belief, and power of the proof that they bring.”*

**—Represent Justice Board Member**

Represent Justice believes deeply that a growing ecosystem of system-impacted storytellers across the country is necessary to both prevent harmful rollbacks of reforms that would take us back to the worst levels of mass incarceration, and to inspire a safer future that relies less on punishment. As an innovative organization with outcomes spanning the arts, impact media, criminal legal system reform, leadership development and empowerment, and narrative change, Represent Justice will continue to showcase the value, demand, convening power, community impact, and catalytic opportunities that connection through storytelling brings.



# Strategic Planning Approach



To inform our plan for the next three years, we designed an approach that considered the need for sustainability and measurement and sought out the perspectives and input of our full community of stakeholders.

We surveyed and interviewed dozens of our Ambassadors, organizational partners, board members, and funders. Thank you to Marci McLendon for stewarding this process, and for her thought partnership on this approach. We also conducted a series of in-person meetings with staff and convened the board of directors to discuss the legal reform landscape and risk analysis for Represent Justice moving forward. We are deeply grateful to all involved for their thoughtful responses and dedication to helping chart the path forward for Represent Justice.

# Key Definitions

Represent Justice uses the below definitions when discussing the people we serve and power we build with our communities:

## Legal system

The system of prisons, jails, and courts that incarcerate, displace, and conduct surveillance on people, as well as the intersecting failures of public health, economic, and social systems that put people at risk of being incarcerated, such as lack of housing, mental health support, and substance abuse treatment. This system also deprives system-impacted people of economic and political opportunities via felony disenfranchisement and lack of fair employment.

## System-impacted

Individuals and communities who have been impacted by the legal system and their families, loved ones, and support networks that are harmed by the trauma, absence, and deprived opportunities of those who are incarcerated. Our programs work with system-impacted individuals both inside and outside prison facilities and correctional institutions.

## Narrative Power (Individual)

The individual power of our Ambassadors, film participants, and system-impacted partners, through personal healing, skills, and belonging, to use their story to reach diverse audiences and change the conversation around the legal system in their community.

**“Through film, Represent Justice allows us to bring our ideas and our stories to life in a way that is bigger and better quality than just an article or an interview, and provides the tools necessary to be good at it.” —Represent Justice Ambassador**

## Narrative Power (Collective)

The collective power of our Ambassadors, film participants and system-impacted partners, through analysis and firsthand storytelling, to dictate norms and values in how the legal system operates and affects their communities.

**“They helped me see this is not just about me, it is through me that this story gets to be told. They supported me in shifting from ‘I don’t wanna talk’ to ‘there’s a story to be told about an issue that’s impacting everybody’ and they would be there with me to walk me through it.” —Represent Justice Film Participant**

## MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to turn stories into action by building narrative power within system-impacted communities and mobilizing audiences to transform the legal system.

## VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is a fair legal system for system-impacted individuals and communities and an end to extreme sentencing and mass incarceration.







## Organizational Values

- 1 Accountability**  
We take ownership and reflect on our successes as well as setbacks. We are committed to having meaningful and constructive conversations.
- 2 Teamwork**  
Through teamwork and collaboration, we achieve our best results. We support each other's work and uplift each other in times of need. We equally share success and failure.
- 3 Creative and Innovative**  
We remain curious and interested in new approaches. We are willing to test out new and innovative ideas within our programs.
- 4 Inclusive**  
We bring together diverse experiences, backgrounds, and knowledge bases.
- 5 Transformative**  
We are not bound to convention. Our ideas are audacious and future-focused.

## Community Values

- 1 Respect**  
We show a deep appreciation for, and knowledge of, the foundational work done by other organizers and activists. We develop our own expertise and seek continuous learning so that our actions and language can be intentional and thoughtful.
- 2 Empathy**  
Through storytelling, we create proximity to inspire empathy and actively cultivate an understanding of the history and culture of the communities we serve.
- 3 System-Impacted Led**  
Our solutions are formed in collaboration with system-impacted communities. We are mindful of the untold narratives of systemic oppression and educate ourselves on the foundations laid by organizers and activists within the communities in which we are engaged.
- 4 Community-Led**  
We build up our community partners; we provide resources and amplify their platforms and relationships to create lasting impact in their work.
- 5 Passion**  
Our impact on communities is never transactional. We remain committed and dedicated to making a difference.

# Theory of Change

Our theory of change involves building up a critical mass of system-impacted storytellers using film and media to mobilize audiences to take action to transform the legal system.

Stories told in an intentional, strategic way can create new frames for audiences to understand the issues driving mass incarceration. With every new storytelling campaign, we deepen and influence the discourse around our key areas while also building the narrative power of system-impacted storytellers and community organizations working to end mass incarceration across the country.

**The story campaigns we support will align with our four-pillar approach to systemic change:**



# Our Movement Ideology

Represent Justice is a legal reform organization that seeks to reduce harm, advocate for community healing and transformation, and critique the systems that impede true justice.

As an organization dedicated to uplifting the stories and solutions of those closest to the problem, we believe in thoughtful analysis and partnership with movement leaders across these issues, to implement our vision for a fair system and an end to mass incarceration and extreme sentencing.

**Represent Justice WILL NOT advocate for solutions which expand the prison industrial complex.**

This includes policies that add or increase the scope, funding, and authority of the current system, such as new prisons or more funding for police officers, wardens, or corrections officers. This excludes funding that directly benefits folks inside, such as arts and reentry programming, free phone calls, etc.

**Represent Justice WILL NOT partner with prison facilities or correctional institutions.**

While we may have programming that we want to deliver inside, we will not do so in a way that raises the popularity or scope of prison facilities themselves. This means all inside programming at Represent Justice is dedicated to the education, benefit, and livelihood of currently incarcerated people and their families and delivered as in-person programming. Our belief is that the existing models of carceral punishment are harmful, exploitive, and degrading, while providing little to no rehabilitative value.

**Represent Justice WILL partner with reform organizations** for goals that are aligned with our strategic plan and ideology and **Represent Justice WILL also partner with abolition organizations** for goals that are aligned with our strategic plan and ideology.

**Represent Justice WILL engage in intentional community conversations.**

Through strong Alumni mentorship and thoughtful gathering spaces, Represent Justice will create ways for Ambassadors to engage with each other around the purpose of their stories, leading to a meaningful community dialogue on the change they want their stories to effect.

**Represent Justice WILL continue to invest in and be committed to legal system analysis.**

The movement to end mass incarceration moves fast in a shifting landscape and requires a principled understanding and analysis. Represent Justice is committed to building our analysis and understanding of the history and frameworks of the legal system to make informed decisions about the stories, campaigns, and advocacy initiatives that we support.

# Our Core Programs



## ORIGINAL STORYTELLING

Narratives that uphold systems of oppression and punishment are so entrenched that we need a critical mass of system-impacted storytellers to share the truth of their lived experiences to effectively change the way people understand and interact with the system. The Original Storytelling Program is core to Represent Justice and embodies our mission and goals by providing capacity building and narrative change opportunities to people and communities impacted by the legal system.

Lack of narrative power impedes movements for justice. Often, grassroots advocates don't have access to infrastructures to effectively measure and push back on harmful narratives with personal storytelling. **A key component of the Original Storytelling Program is the Ambassador Program, a 12-month fellowship that invests deeply in building the skills of system-impacted leaders who desire to use storytelling as a tool to disrupt harmful narratives and advocate for change.** The purpose of the Ambassador Program is to create a vibrant

ecosystem of effective and well-rounded storytellers who understand how personal narratives and inner world stories are interconnected and can therefore be used to affect systemic and cultural change. This means telling more authentic and nuanced stories about the inner workings and underpinnings of the carceral and legal system, the people it impacts, and how communities can create tools, practices, and strategies that result in increased safety, collective transformation, and economic opportunity.

Part of creating a successful program also means building a community amongst Ambassadors and Represent Justice staff that is nurturing, supportive, and care-centered. As of 2023, the Represent Justice Ambassador Program consists of 29 Alumni from 10 states and the District of Columbia. They are nonprofit leaders, advocates, and artists who make up a growing network of system-impacted leaders who desire to use storytelling as a tool to disrupt harmful narratives and advocate for change.

# AMBASSADOR PROGRAM CYCLE



## Original Storytelling Values

**INCLUSIVITY** in our approach to learning and **DIVERSITY** of learning styles.

**RESPECT** for differing experiences and levels of **KNOWLEDGE** and a desire to meet others where they are.

A willingness to be **CHALLENGED AND CHANGED** in service of the work.

A thorough and expansive **UNDERSTANDING** of the legal system.

Teamwork and both **INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COLLABORATION** to ensure dynamic, effective, and nuanced storytelling.

**RELATIONSHIPS** that are reciprocal, generative, and add capacity and value to our work.

**CLARITY AND AWARENESS** around our skillset and limitations.

Being in **RIGHT RELATIONSHIP** with those who we are accountable to: system-impacted people and communities.

Integrity, intention, and transparency in our **DECISION MAKING**.

Strategy and programmatic planning that is led by and centers those most **DIRECTLY IMPACTED** by the legal system.

Principled disruption of the nonprofit industrial complex in favor of **EMERGENT AND LIBERATORY** practice.

(an intention rooted in racial equity that supports culture shift and systems change).

Dedication to the process as a demonstration of our **COMMITMENT** to building narrative power.

**COURAGEOUS AUTHENTICITY** as a personal trait and programmatic requirement.

**SELF-REFLECTION** as a way to develop accountable leadership that drives iteration and programmatic improvement.

## Original Storytelling Goals

- 1 **Elevate** system-impacted leadership to grow the visibility, influence, and capacity of system-impacted communities, justice movement leaders, and organizations to ensure they're included, heard, and supported.
- 2 **Increase** comfort levels and skills required for effective storytelling.
- 3 **Build** an ecosystem of system-impacted individuals with the skills, tools, community connections, knowledge, and resources needed to effect legal systems change through storytelling.
- 4 **Foster** empowerment and belonging.
- 5 **Distribute** and promote stories that equip community members with sufficient analysis and information to take action.
- 6 **Model** what it means and what it looks like to build storytelling and changemaking power for our communities of Ambassadors, Alumni, and partners.

# ORIGINAL STORYTELLING STRATEGY

## Ambassador Program Strategy

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ecosystem of effective and well-rounded storytellers who understand how personal narratives and inner world stories are interconnected and can therefore be used to affect systemic and cultural change. This means telling more authentic and nuanced stories about the inner workings and underpinnings of the carceral and legal system, the people it impacts, and how communities can create tools, practices, and strategies that result in increased safety, collective transformation, and economic opportunity.

Time and time again, we have heard from our community that the crucial beginning to all effective storytelling is healing and self-care, which creates room for analysis and action. Represent Justice uses trauma-responsive approaches to all aspects of the program, from providing a mental health professional who leads group sessions on specific topics and is available for one-on-one sessions, to creating specific and unique experiences that take into account the trauma and harm most Ambassadors experienced in their lives. This means providing individual care, spaces where Ambassadors can learn and share with one another, and outlets and opportunities to heal from the trauma.

### SKILL AREAS INCLUDE:

- ▶ An Introduction to Narrative Power & Storytelling
- ▶ The Importance of Self Care & Wellness
- ▶ Storytelling for Change
- ▶ Writing Your Story I & II
- ▶ Visual Storytelling
- ▶ Designing an Impact Strategy
- ▶ Your Creative Brief
- ▶ Producing Your Story I & II
- ▶ Designing Your Film Campaign & Impact Strategy
- ▶ Editing Your Film
- ▶ Digital Storytelling
- ▶ Planning for Your Film Premiere

*“They made me feel seen, cared for, respected, and safe. I didn’t know that it could be that way, that I deserved this.”*

**—Represent Justice Ambassador**



## Distribution Strategy

An important part of building narrative power through the Ambassador Program is that throughout the curriculum, Ambassadors are simultaneously learning about and designing a future film campaign for their story project based on the narrative and advocacy goals they've outlined during the training process. With the help of our Films and Series team, we host a series of sessions designed to help Ambassadors develop an impact strategy for their projects, considering key messaging, audience, partnerships, resources, and evaluation.

Alongside creative and technical trainings, Ambassadors learn about media impact and how their stories can increase public demand to end mass incarceration. As film production is wrapping up, Represent Justice staff work with Ambassadors to design digital and visual assets like landing pages, promotional toolkits, and press releases. We design rollout plans and coordinate **paid appearances, community screenings, and panel conversations**. Finally, each Ambassador receives tools and resources to measure and report impact, e.g. audience surveys, feedback collection, and data analytics.

Depending on the distribution goals of each project, additional tactics can include **message testing** to determine the most persuadable audiences for the film and baselines for public opinion around

the call to action, boosted ad campaigns to drive online action, and/or film festival outreach to connect Ambassadors with culture change influencers or entertainment industry professionals. Message testing is important because it: 1) provides storytellers with a baseline understanding of public opinion on their issues, 2) determines the effectiveness of key messages covered by the film, and 3) provides Ambassadors with the data around the most persuadable audiences in order to focus distribution strategies—a helpful tactic for pitching media and digital distributors.

Impact campaign activities are managed closely with the expertise of Represent Justice staff as advisors, with allocated budget for direct costs, and access to the Represent Justice partnership network and audience of over 180,000 grassroots supporters across the country.

Following the completion of the Ambassador film campaigns, Ambassadors are inducted into the Represent Justice Speakers Bureau, where they can continue honing and sharing their story with diverse audiences for paid opportunities across the country. They may also participate in storytelling partnerships, advise on campaigns (films or advocacy), and become paid speakers or trainers for future Ambassador cohorts.





## Community Storytelling

Over the past few years, community storytelling campaigns led by Represent Justice—such as #JusticeforJulius and #JusticeforLaKeith—have garnered tens of millions of views and provided a launching point for cultural engagement and media attention to the important stories of injustice in local communities. Through our outreach and continued engagement, we have identified a significant unmet demand for authentic community storytelling that accurately reflects the lived experiences of individuals impacted by the legal system. This lack of authentic storytelling perpetuates harmful narratives and stereotypes, inhibiting public and policy-level understanding and action. While impacted communities have long desired to correct these harmful narratives, community organizations often lack the necessary infrastructure, knowledge, and strategy to effectively counter these harmful narratives with genuine stories. This limitation hampers public access to the real experiences and viable solutions articulated by those with lived experience in the legal system, which, in turn, affects transformative action at the community, state, and national levels. To interrupt these harmful narratives, there is an urgent need to equip community organizations serving those directly

impacted by the legal system with the skills and resources to authentically tell their own stories. This involves strategic partnerships, advocacy, and the development of a storytelling curriculum that brings key audiences closer to a more informed view of mass incarceration and state violence.

*Over the past few years, community storytelling campaigns led by Represent Justice—such as #JusticeforJulius and #JusticeforLaKeith—have garnered tens of millions of views and provided a launching point for cultural engagement and media attention to the important stories of injustice in local communities.*

## Community Storytelling Values

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The foundation of our Community Storytelling Training Program is rooted in a set of core values that guide our mission and actions. These values—respect, empathy, community leadership, and unwavering passion—reflect our commitment to honoring the voices and experiences of those affected by the legal system. We believe that by upholding these principles, we can foster a culture of understanding and support that paves the way for genuine change and empowerment within impacted communities.

## Community Storytelling Goals

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- 1 Equip**  
Equip community organizations with the necessary infrastructure, knowledge, research, and strategic tools to effectively tell genuine stories that challenge harmful narratives.
- 2 Establish**  
Establish strategic partnerships with community organizations to collectively counter harmful narratives and advocate for change in order to amplify the impact of current and future storytelling efforts.
- 3 Prepare**  
Prepare community organizations to co-produce and distribute short films with Represent Justice in order to use film campaigns as a medium to convey their narratives.
- 4 Promote**  
Promote authentic storytelling that accurately reflects the lived experiences of individuals impacted by the legal system.



## Community Storytelling Strategy

Our Community Storytelling Training program equips community organizations with the necessary infrastructure, knowledge, and strategic tools to: 1) tell genuine stories that challenge harmful narratives, 2) more effectively convey their message to a broader audience, and 3) enhance their ongoing efforts to educate and mobilize their communities. The program also aims to improve grassroots- and grassstops-level understanding of the issues faced by individuals impacted by the legal system by providing a platform for their authentic stories, ultimately leading to more informed action. Through film production trainings, Community Partners are prepared to co-produce and distribute short films with Represent Justice. This programming promotes authentic storytelling that accurately reflects the lived experiences of individuals impacted by the legal system.

In selecting Community Partners, we give priority to states with high rates of incarceration, which allows us to direct our resources and efforts where they can have the most significant impact. Concurrently, we seek to expand our reach by engaging with organizations that are new to Represent Justice. We also place a clear emphasis on those whose program areas align with our geographic priorities, issue areas, and other partner criteria, ensuring that our collaborative efforts are rooted in mutual goals and a shared vision for justice and storytelling.

*...we train each partner on narrative strategy, messaging research, film production, and audience engagement strategy to create a lasting community infrastructure of knowledge and buy-in for sharing firsthand stories for advocacy.*

Our Community Storytelling program is not a series of one-off campaigns, but rather a method of building a **community brain trust around identified advocacy priorities**, forging new, local collaborations with Community Partners working to change the legal system in their city or state. The brain trust includes **presentations and trainings on**

**messaging and polling data** that educate partners on our approach to understanding knowledge, sentiment, and support around key advocacy issues, and provides baseline data for the development of message testing. This process is crucial, as it guides the creation of compelling narratives that resonate with audiences and spark engagement. It also offers our partners a valuable toolkit for refining future communications, fostering an enduring legacy of narrative impact excellence. Through this nine-month Community Storytelling Program, we **train each partner on narrative strategy,**

**messaging research, film production, and audience engagement strategy** to create a lasting community infrastructure of knowledge and buy-in for sharing firsthand stories for advocacy. Following training and campaign planning, Community Partners receive guidance on their outreach and distribution plans and begin crafting messaging and visual assets. Represent Justice staff **support creating a pitch deck, garnering press, and organizing a community screening of the film.**



## SKILL AREAS INCLUDE:

- ▶ Narrative Power & Storytelling 101
- ▶ Creating a Narrative Framework
- ▶ Writing Your Story
- ▶ Visual Storytelling
- ▶ Designing an Impact Campaign Strategy
- ▶ Producing Your Story: Production Planning
- ▶ Producing Your Story: Production Training

Community Partners have access to all created resources—such as messaging research, storytelling campaign materials—access to the Represent Justice supporter network, and continued one-on-one advisory support from Represent Justice staff. The materials, designed with well-researched insights and best practices, are available for our partners to disseminate among their networks and incorporate into existing campaigns, thereby extending the reach and impact of our collective storytelling mission.



## FILMS AND SERIES

A 2022 study from the American University Center for Media and Social Impact included 48 legal system-focused documentary films streamed by major networks over a 6 year period. Based on publicly available information, only one (1) film had a formerly incarcerated filmmaker at the helm. The closest most Americans will ever get to a prison is through stories shaped by media reporting and entertainment. Too often, these stories sensationalize and trivialize. Even reform-minded stories are frequently obstacle-based in framing.

This lack of narrative power deeply impacts communities' power. Often, advocates don't have access to infrastructures to effectively measure and push back on harmful narratives with personal storytelling. This has a direct impact on American culture. The public doesn't have access to authentic stories and solutions from those who have lived experience in the prison system. Harmful, fear-based stories perpetuate a cycle of incarceration that spurs investment in punishment.

Represent Justice harnesses the power of fiction and non-fiction films and series to drive audience demand for an end to mass incarceration. Using a care-centered and creative collaboration

framework with system-impacted film participants and filmmakers, we are building an ecosystem of individuals with the skills, tools, community connections, knowledge and resources needed to affect legal systems change through storytelling campaigns.

Represent Justice Films and Series Impact Campaigns are activities that are launched

alongside the release of two films per year that are helmed (written, directed, produced, and/or edited) by system-impacted people, and projects that align with our organizational priorities, such as geographic and issue areas. Campaign activities are designed with the film participant as a paid advisor and include screenings and events, paid speaker appearances, digital storytelling campaigns to uplift key narratives, mental health support, advocacy activities, trainings, and many other tactics designed

to mobilize audiences during the release of the film. Through our open call, impact campaign projects are reviewed by system-impacted leaders, community partners with expertise in the film subject matter, and Represent Justice staff and leadership. We aim to select values-aligned films with the greatest demonstrated authorship, potential for strategic impact, cinematic quality, and audience reach.

*...we are building an ecosystem of individuals with the skills, tools, community connections, knowledge and resources needed to affect legal systems change through storytelling campaigns.*

## Films and Series Values

### Authorship

Across all our programs, Represent Justice is committed to building narrative power for system-impacted communities, which are often excluded from accessing resources to document and distribute their own stories. We strive to work on projects that are (co)directed, (co)produced, or (co)written by system-impacted people.

### Trauma-Informed

Recognizing that sharing stories through films with wide releases and speaking about traumatic experiences can be triggering and generate anxiety, we provide access to culturally appropriate mental health professionals and build in time and budget for unforeseen challenges that arise.

### Knowledgeable

We actively pursue and grow our thorough and expansive understanding of the legal system and the justice movement in order to implement effective film campaigns that generate public action in support of the movement to end mass incarceration.

### Collaborative

Throughout our program activities, we aim to build relationships and partnerships that are collaborative in sharing knowledge and expertise, that uplift each other, and bring meaningful value on all sides.

### Values, Ethics, and Accountability

Represent Justice strives to meet the standard set in the Documentary Accountability Working Group's Framework for Values, Ethics, and Accountability in Nonfiction Filmmaking. We work to center the needs and experiences of the people and communities who are participating in films, with transparency and care.

## Films and Series Goals

1 **To grow the visibility and influence** of system-impacted storytelling through paid speaking appearances and advisory roles, trauma-responsive mental health support, narrative power coaching, and connections to a network of formerly incarcerated leaders.

2 **To influence societal perceptions** by reaching key audiences with humanizing stories centering and told by people who are system-impacted and shape those audiences' narratives around mass incarceration through impact screenings, digital storytelling, and targeted press engagement around the release of films helmed by currently and formerly incarcerated filmmakers and storytellers.

## Films and Series Strategy

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Our Films and Series campaigns grow the visibility and influence of system-impacted leadership through capacity-building activities that are aligned with specific campaign goals. Activities include **paid advisory roles** shaping our impact campaigns and speaking appearances, such as panels and keynotes that are negotiated and secured by Represent Justice program staff. In 2024, we will launch a **Speakers Bureau** managed by Represent Justice staff where film participants can be part of a network of other system-impacted leaders who are growing their narrative power through storytelling via paid engagements. Other activities include the **creation of innovative educational resources**—such as curricula, workshop videos, or legislative action guides—by our system-impacted filmmakers or participants that can be used for continued advocacy and storytelling work beyond the span of an impact campaign. System-impacted film participants have **access to mental health support** with a trained mental health professional who can support them through challenges that arise in sharing their story. Finally, we provide **access to an emergency relief fund** to address crises around housing, health emergencies, or legal issues, because so many system-impacted storytellers are working without a financial safety net due to the sentence they served.







Films and Series campaigns also maintain a narrative change goal of influencing societal perceptions by reaching and influencing targeted discourse around and responses to issues related to mass incarceration, including change in language, stories, storytellers, and the framing of issues. This change occurs through **targeted digital storytelling** on social media and email campaigns through our network of over 180,000 supporters. In partnership with film participants and partner organizations, we will identify digital storytelling opportunities to reach audiences primed to engage with stories from system-impacted storytellers and take digital actions like signing petitions, emailing their elected officials, donating to partner organizations, or signing up for volunteer roles with partner organizations. Films and Series campaigns also seek to generate **targeted press** engagement through op-eds and interviews with film participants and filmmakers during the biggest moments in a film's public life, which builds on industry press and buzz around a film to reach audiences in key states, or within key audiences, tied to campaign activities.

*Films and Series campaigns also maintain a narrative change goal of influencing societal perceptions by reaching and influencing targeted discourse around and responses to issues related to mass incarceration, including change in language, stories, storytellers, and the framing of issues.*

Our program selects films and series through our **Impact Campaign Open Call**. Many film teams do not have the funds (or capacity to co-fundraise) to launch impact campaigns—a barrier to entry that prohibits many system-impacted filmmakers from realizing the impact potential of their projects. We are working to address this need, and to build a robust pipeline of projects for our Films and Series program through our Open Call. Our application

opens once a year for two months—August and September—for films and series whose film teams hope to launch impact campaigns the following year. During that time, we broadly solicit both narrative and documentary films and projects, including shorts, series, and features. The criteria we use to review projects examine the strength of the story shared; the opportunity for impact, informed by landscaping conversations with community partners with subject area expertise; the project's

authorship; and the values, ethics, and accountability the film team uses throughout their production and release. In addition to these four criteria, we will give extra consideration and priority to projects that come to us from our Ambassador network, projects with stories and potential impact activities that align with either our organizational key issue areas (gender-inclusive justice, youth justice, alternatives to incarceration, and reentry and opportunity) and geographic priorities. Our program team reviews all eligible projects that are submitted and, using the criteria, **identifies a shortlist of finalist projects to be reviewed and discussed in a participatory process.**

The process includes our entire staff, system-impacted leaders from our Ambassador and film participant Alumni network, and a representative from a community partner organization. Based on the quantitative and qualitative assessment of these criteria, our leadership team **identifies two projects to receive impact campaign partnerships with Represent Justice.**

# Strategies to Achieve our Goals and Objectives

Over the next three years, Represent Justice will implement three key strategies in order to meet the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan.

First, a robust and thoughtful Issue Priority strategy that outlines the conversations, policies, and solutions that we seek to address through our Programs. Second, a geographic strategy that analyzes the top states driving incarceration and an expansion plan strategy to be in the states that drive the top 70% of all incarceration<sup>2</sup> before the end of the third year. Finally, a Speakers Bureau strategy that unifies the work we do to support storytellers across our Programs and creates continued economic opportunities while keeping our network of system-impacted storytellers engaged and participating in narrative shift efforts nationwide.

## 1 KEY ISSUE PRIORITIES

The policy environment in legal reform work is increasingly difficult, especially when not paired sufficiently with local grassroots voices and organizing. Therefore, we will seek defined advocacy outcomes responsively based on the needs and desires of our Ambassadors and other community partners. The below issue areas were recurring themes uncovered during our stakeholder analysis for this strategic plan. To properly develop substantive knowledge of the legal system in these areas, we will begin placing an emphasis on these issues throughout our programming. This does not necessarily mean legislation, but this does mean stories that shine a light on these specific issues within the legal system that could later lead to legislative and policy targets. This allows for deeper partnership development, deeper staff knowledge and analysis, and more predictable progress towards ending mass incarceration.

GENDER-INCLUSIVE JUSTICE

YOUTH JUSTICE

ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION

REENTRY AND OPPORTUNITY

## GENDER-INCLUSIVE JUSTICE

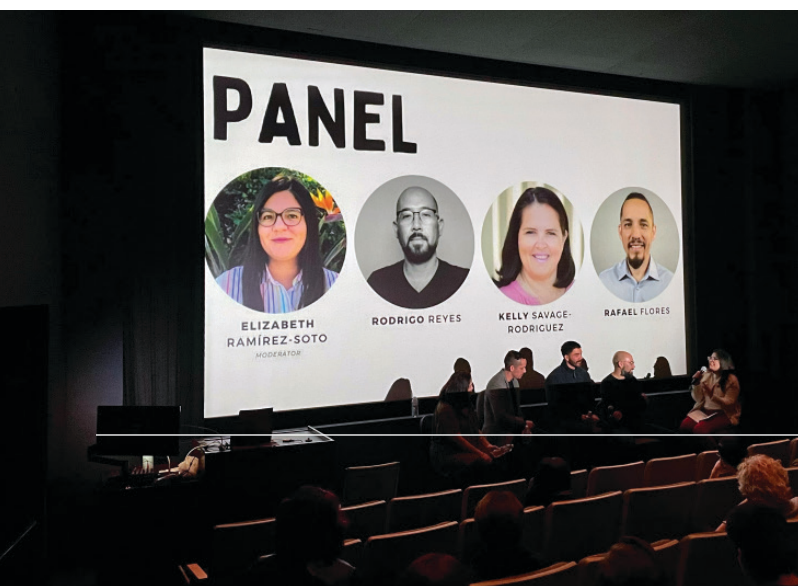
Since 1980, the women's prison population has grown by over 700%—faster than any other population in the country. Over 80% of women entering the legal system have experienced some form of sexual, partner, or caregiver violence. Additionally, women in prison experience high rates of serious mental illness (32%), medical issues (53%), and drug/alcohol dependence (82%). LGBTQ people, in particular BIPOC transgender women, are overrepresented at all areas of the prison system.<sup>3</sup>

Represent Justice seeks to influence discussion around the laws, policies, and practices that address the unique drivers of incarceration for women, as well as the unique barriers experienced in their reentry. This includes replacing destructive narratives—“why didn't she just leave?” and the “perfect victim,” in which women who do not fit racist and bigoted stereotypes of what a “victim” should be are shown little or no compassion—with intersectional narratives that highlight the compounded traumas of racism, sexism, and poverty in and outside of the carceral system. By uplifting stories that link rape culture to prison culture through policy and practice, we can further unpack how violence happens at interpersonal and communal levels and actualize interventions that prioritize gender justice and holistic community.

### Policy areas include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ **Sentencing relief policies that prevent the criminalization of survivors of abuse and gender-based violence who have been involved in crimes.**
- ▶ **Ensuring the safe and dignified treatment of women in the legal system (e.g., protection from sexual assaults, family-centered treatment, dignity for pregnant women, and access to female hygiene products).**
- ▶ **Assigning women to prisons that keep them close to their children and eliminating barriers to reentry that keep women from their families.**

As Represent Justice expands its knowledge in this area of gender-inclusive justice, we will seek to refine and grow our understanding of the many nuanced issues that impact gender non-conforming and trans people, who are four times more likely than other U.S. adults to be arrested and/or incarcerated. In addition, transgender and gender non-conforming people are much more likely—in society as well as in the legal system—to be refused adequate medical care and to experience continued dehumanization, abuse, and disregard for their identity.



## YOUTH JUSTICE

The United States incarcerates more young people than any country in the world. According to data from the ACLU, on any given day, over 60,000 youth are confined in juvenile facilities and each year 250,000 kids<sup>4</sup> below the age of 18 are tried and prosecuted in adult courts. Represent Justice seeks to influence discourse around related laws, policies, and practices in order to end the harmful treatment of children in the legal system, respect their humanity and dignity, and recognize their great capacity for change. This includes replacing the narrative framing of the “incorrigible” child and the “superpredator” with “treat children like children.”

### Policy areas include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ Eliminate the school-to-prison and foster-care-to-prison pipelines.
- ▶ Prioritize diversionary programs and alternatives to incarceration.
- ▶ Prevent children younger than 14 from being charged with any criminal offense or impacted by the legal system in any way.
- ▶ Prohibit or limit the transfer of children to adult courts (e.g., Raise the Age legislation).
- ▶ Ensure that children are adequately represented by legal counsel during interrogation.
- ▶ Prevent children from being sentenced to life without parole (JLWOP) and other extreme sentences that do not allow meaningful opportunities for release.

As Represent Justice expands its knowledge in this area of gender-inclusive justice, we will seek to refine and grow our understanding of the many nuanced issues that impact gender non-conforming and trans people, who are four times more likely than other U.S. adults to be arrested and/or incarcerated. In addition, transgender and gender non-conforming people are much more likely—in society as well as in the legal system—to be refused adequate medical care and to experience continued dehumanization, abuse, and disregard for their identity.



## ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION

Represent Justice seeks to uplift the systemic failure of mass incarceration and present reimagined alternatives to incarceration that don't rely on jails and courts, but instead treat root causes with community investment. For example, it is estimated that nearly two-thirds of people entering the justice system are struggling with some form of substance abuse, and over one-third of people entering the justice system have been diagnosed with a mental illness. This includes replacing the narrative of “investments in incarceration and policing are necessary to keep dangerous criminals off the streets and keep the communities safe” with “investments in the community (health, housing, education, etc.) are more effective ways to keep communities safe.”

**Examples include, but are not limited to:**

- ▶ Substance abuse treatment.
- ▶ Mental health support.
- ▶ Bail reform.
- ▶ Community street teams (e.g., violence interruption).
- ▶ Community-led diversion programs.
- ▶ Community investment, such as affordable housing and job training.



## REENTRY AND OPPORTUNITY

Over 3.8 million people in the United States are currently under some form of legal system surveillance (e.g., pardon, parole) and many are disenfranchised from basic opportunities, like the right to vote, pursuit of education with student loan assistance, access to housing, and the ability to pursue meaningful employment. Despite the fact that over 95% of incarcerated people will one day reenter society, there are over 45,000 collateral consequences that<sup>5</sup> affect the ability for those returning home to live meaningful lives, putting them at risk of recidivism. Represent Justice seeks to influence discourse around dehumanizing practices—including language—that create barriers to reentry for system-impacted individuals and communities. Our programming instead highlights success stories of system-impacted leaders effecting positive change in their communities, with examples that provide hope and opportunity. This includes replacing the narrative of “strict parole and probation laws are necessary to keep dangerous offenders from reoffending” with “policies of exclusion and barriers to reentry that deny incarcerated people their humanity and well-being, drive costly recidivism and decrease public safety.”

**Examples of barriers to address include, but are not limited to:**

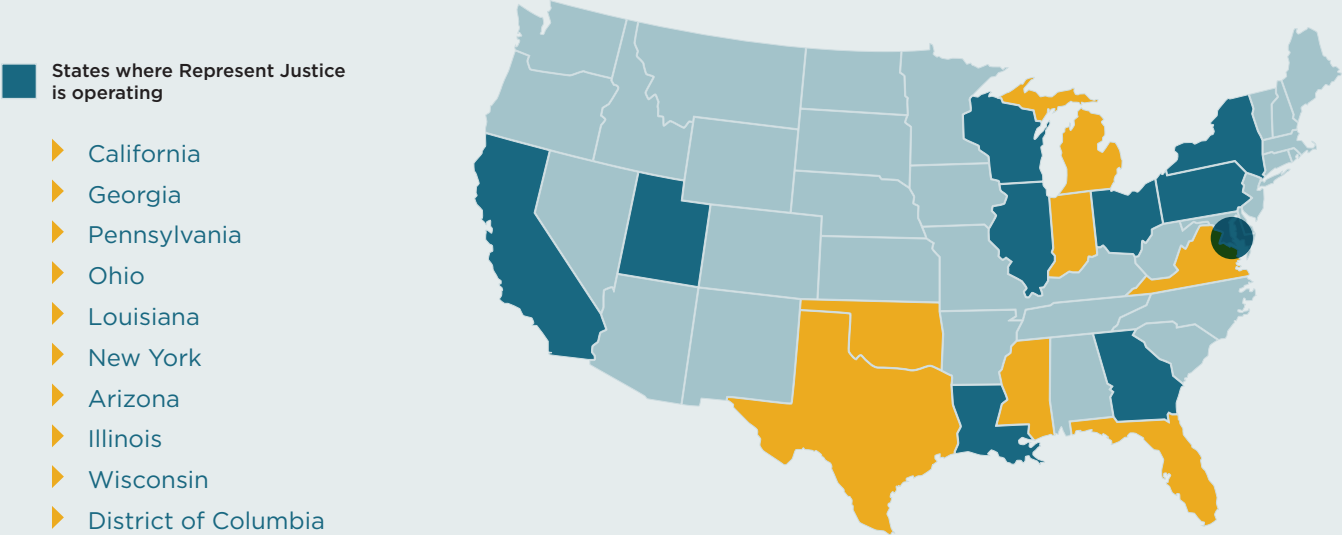
- ▶ **Felony disenfranchisement.**
- ▶ **Lack of access to fair hiring and employment.**
- ▶ **Denied access to housing.**
- ▶ **Eliminating costly court-ordered fees and fines.**
- ▶ **Ineligibility for public benefits.**
- ▶ **Ineligibility for student loans and financial aid.**



## 2 KEY GEOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES

To build up a solid ecosystem of system-impacted storytellers with narrative change campaigns in local communities, Represent Justice seeks to broaden our reach in the coming years to geographic areas covering a critical mass—which we are defining as 70%—of the total population of people incarcerated in prisons and jails across the country.

Currently, Represent Justice operates in nine different states and the District of Columbia, covering a geographic area of roughly 800,000 of the 1.8 million people in jails and prisons. Over half (17) of our Ambassadors come from states that are among the top five incarcerators of children in the country. The below geographies in which Represent Justice currently operates represent roughly 45%<sup>6</sup> of the total population of people incarcerated in prisons and jails across the country.



Represent Justice plans to enter an additional seven states by 2026, broadening our reach to geographies covering a total of 1.26 million incarcerated people, or a critical mass of 70% of the total population. Alongside this, we will encourage Ambassadors to produce and show their films locally in their own communities and states.

Building on our current roster of nine states and D.C., target states for the new strategic plan will be among the top twenty incarcerators in the country, with considerations for funding, community demand, and existing partnership (see map).

Represent Justice will expand thoughtfully into new geographic areas by adding geography criteria to our Ambassador recruitment and Films and Series Campaign Open Call selection.

As we expand into these new geographic areas, we will continue to build out storytelling work in our current states by generating paid speaking opportunities, film campaign advisor opportunities, and mentorship opportunities through our Alumni Ambassadors.

### 3

## SPEAKERS BUREAU STRATEGY

Over the past two years, Represent Justice has negotiated over \$100,000 in speaking fees for system-impacted storytellers, primarily from colleges and universities, businesses, and other key audiences. Over the next three years, we plan to expand and deepen this strategy to secure \$400,000 in fees. In 2024, Represent Justice will launch a mission-driven speakers bureau representing the extraordinary ecosystem of system-impacted movement leaders, exonerees, artists, campaign leaders, filmmakers, and film participants who work in partnership with Represent Justice to transform the legal system. Building upon trauma-informed learnings from our Ambassador Program, the Represent Justice Speakers Bureau will be a full-service bureau that provides capacity-building opportunities, in addition to traditional speakers bureau services.

### The goals for our system-impacted leaders Speakers Bureau include:

- ▶ Build storytelling capacity and narrative power. This includes growing their visibility and influence to ensure they are included and heard in decision-making that directly impacts their lives.
- ▶ Generate meaningful income to support their livelihoods, fully acknowledging their lived experience and expertise.
- ▶ Grow a critical mass of authentic, effective storytellers that can properly utilize their lived experiences to share stories that can effectively change the way people understand, and interact with, the legal system.
- ▶ Create a sustainable, revenue-generating model and industry standard for increasing narrative power that invests in marginalized communities and helps them take ownership of their stories and use them to catalyze change.

The Speakers Bureau website will provide filters to sort speakers by topic, and these groupings will inform the outreach strategy for pitches and speaker recruitment in the future. Additionally, with robust recruitment from both Films and Series as well as Ambassador Programming, we will connect our storytellers to new audiences and seek to repeat speaking opportunities among multiple Ambassadors in order to make sure audiences are being connected to multiple legal system issues.





# The Pillars of our Plan

Based on input from key stakeholders, Represent Justice's three-year plan supports our mission via three Strategic Pillars:

## MOBILIZE AUDIENCES TO ACTION

Generate public action around, and responses to, issues related to policing and mass incarceration, including change in language, stories, storytellers, and the framing of issues. Engage and mobilize policymakers, cultural leaders, and business institutions towards structural change that creates opportunities for system-impacted people while drastically reducing the size and reach of the prison system.

## BUILD NARRATIVE POWER

Create opportunities and pathways for system-impacted individuals to grow in their leadership and narrative power in order to better sustain themselves and their communities. Build new narrative infrastructures that connect the stories of system-impacted people to one another and to new audiences.

## ACHIEVE SUSTAINABILITY

Ensure Represent Justice's longevity and long-term impact through efficient use of resources and growing relationships with key strategic partners and funders.



# Evaluation (2024-2026)

Represent Justice is building a powerful ecosystem of firsthand storytelling using film and media and is supporting campaigns to drive conversation at the national and local levels.



Over the past three years, Represent Justice has developed, refined, and grown its program strategy to meet the capacities needed to continue shifting narratives around the legal system in alignment with our mission and vision.

Over the next three years, our ultimate goal is to begin to reach a critical mass of directly impacted storytellers and movement leaders who are using film and media campaigns as a means to transform the legal system in their communities.

To achieve this, we will accomplish the following measurable objectives for our programming. To monitor our progress and ensure accountability to our strategic plan, we will: 1) benchmark and track metrics across our programs, 2) develop dedicated reporting, and 3) review the strategic plan annually, adapting as necessary to the changing legal reform landscape and the demands of our Ambassadors and other community partners. Unless otherwise noted, objectives below are three-year objectives.

# RESULTS-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

## Evaluation is a key part of harnessing the use of stories towards systems change.

Our commitment to mobilizing audiences and building narrative power means we must view impact as a function of both individual capacity-building as well as collective actions taken by communities. Represent Justice is adopting the Results-Based Accountability framework as a useful way of thinking through the impact of our programs. Results-Based Accountability (RBA) is a disciplined approach to consistently measuring the benefits of the work of social justice organizations. We intentionally take an “ecosystem approach,” which gives us flexibility in how, when, and where we deploy stories in any given year. This strategic choice—particularly considering the increasingly volatile legal reform landscape—allows us to be adaptable and flexible as to the specific impact in order to have the most impact.



The RBA framework asks three standard questions to evaluate the impact of our programming:

HOW MUCH DID WE DO?

HOW WELL DID WE DO IT?

IS ANYONE BETTER OFF?

The question of **how much did we do** is a function of the numbers and reach of the stories we share with diverse audiences or the trainings we implement with system-impacted leaders. Within our Films and Series program, this metric often has to do with screenings and audience reach. Within our Ambassador Program, this may refer to trainings or skills-building activities, like creating a distribution plan for a narrative campaign.

#### More examples of how much did we do:

- ▶ # of screenings
- ▶ # of audience members reached
- ▶ # of views
- ▶ # of impressions
- ▶ # of online engagement
- ▶ # of storytelling projects produced
- ▶ # of media pitches
- ▶ # of policy-focused screenings
- ▶ # of community advocacy events in policy storytelling
- ▶ # of grassroots organizations engaged in policy storytelling
- ▶ # of training hours & trainings
- ▶ # of Ambassadors enrolled in the Speakers Bureau

When asking **how well did we do it**, our focus is on the immediate, short-term impact of the stories and trainings we implement. This is primarily expressed as key audience members reached and immediate engagement. This will often include major shifts within audience survey responses, or the number of Ambassador opportunities created alongside the launch of our original storytelling campaigns.

#### More examples of how well did we do it:

- ▶ % of general audience members engaged who report stronger understanding or commitment to take action
- ▶ % of online engagement with digital stories
- ▶ # of media opportunities generated from storytelling projects
- ▶ % of screening hosts reporting strong audience interest
- ▶ % Ambassador training attendance
- ▶ \$ revenue generated through licensing fees
- ▶ # of paid speaking opportunities
- ▶ \$ amount of donations created through screenings
- ▶ # or % increase in follower growth
- ▶ # or % increase in use of digital tools/posting rate
- ▶ # of system-impacted people involved in production or distribution of storytelling projects
- ▶ % of cultural institutional audience members engaged who support campaign actions
- ▶ # of media opportunities secured
- ▶ % of system-actors and screening attendees surveyed reporting a stronger understanding of the story issue area
- ▶ # of system-actors and major stakeholders in attendance and engaged who report stronger understanding of the story issue area
- ▶ % or # of journalists who commit to shifting reporting practices% or # of TV showrunners and writers who commit to shifting writing/staffing practices

The final question in the framework of **is anyone better off** is a question that is evaluated through the medium-to long-term impact of our work, including specific actions taken by key audience members (e.g. policymakers or cultural leaders).

#### More examples of is anyone better off:

- ▶ % of system-actors and major stakeholders engaged who express a commitment to take action
- ▶ # of sentence reductions
- ▶ # of petition signatures or advocacy actions
- ▶ # of bills supported
- ▶ # of bill sponsors engaged
- ▶ % or # of Ambassador paid TV writer or showrunner opportunities
- ▶ % message testing shifts
- ▶ % polling shifts
- ▶ % social listening shifts
- ▶ % or # of Ambassadors or film participants reporting strengthened skills, comfort, and belonging
- ▶ # of innovative film subject tools created
- ▶ \$ amount of paid speaking opportunities for Ambassadors, film participants, or other impacted people
- ▶ % of earned press and media

*Our commitment to mobilizing audiences and building narrative power means we must view impact as a function of both individual capacity-building as well as collective actions taken by communities.*



# GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND METRICS

## STRATEGIC PILLAR 1: MOBILIZING AUDIENCES TO ACTION

### GOALS

- ▶ To generate public action around, and responses to, issues related to policing and mass incarceration, including change in language, stories, storytellers, and the framing of issues.
- ▶ To mobilize policymakers, cultural leaders, and business institutions towards structural change that creates positive opportunities for system-impacted people, while drastically reducing the size and reach of the prison system.

### OBJECTIVES AND METRICS

- ▶ Create and distribute two pieces of community-developed content each year, co-produced by partner organizations and distributed in partnership with local community members for advocacy goals.
- ▶ Support the implementation of two feature length film campaigns per year nationally, with films helmed by system-impacted storytellers.
  - Book 50 impact screenings per campaign, for a total of 100 per year, or 300 impact screenings across three years.
- ▶ Support the implementation of ten storytelling campaigns with Ambassador-produced short films per year.
  - Book ten impact and film festival screenings per film, for a total of 100 screenings per year, or 300 impact and film festival screenings across three years.
  - Help negotiate one streaming and/or film festival partnership for one film per year, for a total of three streaming partnerships across three years.



## STRATEGIC PILLAR 2: BUILDING NARRATIVE POWER

### GOALS

- ▶ To create storytelling opportunities and economic pathways for system-impacted individuals to grow in their storytelling leadership, to better sustain themselves and their communities.
- ▶ To build new narrative infrastructures that connect the stories of system-impacted people to one another and to new audiences together.

### OBJECTIVES AND METRICS

- ▶ Launch a Speakers Bureau in year one and generate \$400,000 in speaking opportunities by year three.
- ▶ Launch a Community Storytelling pilot in year one with two to three partner organizations.
  - 14 community organizations participate in each Community Storytelling brain trust.
  - 80% of Community Storytelling Partners report significant improvement in storytelling skills.
- ▶ Develop and support the distribution of six film participant innovative resources over three years.
- ▶ Complete 36 Ambassador Trainings and six Film Participant Trainings over three years.
- ▶ With a trauma-informed lens, support Ambassadors to produce 30 short film projects.
- ▶ Provide \$300,000 in production grants to Ambassadors for short film projects.



## STRATEGIC PILLAR 3: MOBILIZING AUDIENCES TO ACTION

### GOALS

- ▶ Expand Represent Justice staff and Board expertise.
- ▶ Raise awareness of Represent Justice within the film and impact media industries.
- ▶ Strengthen fund development.

### OBJECTIVES AND METRICS

- ▶ All programs fully funded by end of year one.
- ▶ Increase end-of-year operating reserves to six months of expenses (estimated \$1.2 million) by end of year two.
- ▶ Add three system-impacted staff members by end of year three and develop a retention strategy for system-impacted employees.
- ▶ Add two system-impacted board members by end of year two.
- ▶ Implement a Results-Based Accountability measurement framework.
  - Add Data and Evaluation staff resources to implement RBA framework by end of year one.
- ▶ Diversify and increase funding.
  - Add at least three new institutional major funders (\$150,000+) per year.
  - Convert 50% of all revenue to unrestricted by end of year three.
  - Shift 10% of annual revenue to individual giving/earned income by end of year three.
  - Add at least one corporate funder (\$150,000+) per year.





## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Center for Popular Democracy, Law for Black Lives, and Black Youth Project 100, “Freedom To Thrive: Reimagining Safety & Security In Our Communities” (Brooklyn, NY; New York; Chicago: 2017), available at <https://populardemocracy.org/sites/default/files/Freedom%20To%20Thrive%2C%20Higher%20Res%20Version.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Ashley Nellis, Ph. D. (2023, January 25). *Mass incarceration trends*. The Sentencing Project. <https://www.sentencingproject.org/reports/mass-incarceration-trends>

<sup>3</sup> Sawyer, A. K. and W. (2023, March 1). *Women’s mass incarceration: The whole pie 2023*. | Prison Policy Initiative. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2023women.html>

<sup>4</sup> American Civil Liberties Union. (2022, February 15). *Alternatives to youth incarceration*. American Civil Liberties Union. <https://www.aclu.org/issues/juvenile-justice/youth-incarceration/alternatives-youth-incarceration>

<sup>5</sup> Kimble, C., & Grawert, A. (2021, June 28). *Collateral consequences and the enduring nature of punishment*. Brennan Center for Justice. <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/collateral-consequences-and-enduring-nature-punishment>

<sup>6</sup> Ashley Nellis, Ph. D. (2023, January 25). *Mass incarceration trends*. The Sentencing Project. <https://www.sentencingproject.org/reports/mass-incarceration-trends>

## Photo Credits

- 1 Alumni Ambassador Donna Hylton with colleagues helping register voters (*Drew London*)
- 3 Alumni Ambassador Waleisah Wilson during the Producing Your Story Training (*Nathalie Gordon*)
- 3 CEO Daniel Forkkio speaking to the 2022 Ambassadors during the Producing Your Story Training (*Nathalie Gordon*)
- 3 2021 Alumni Ambassadors during filming of the Represent Justice sizzle reel (*Represent Justice*)
- 5 Alumni Ambassador Donna Hylton photographed at a get-out-the-vote event (*Drew London*)
- 5 Ambassador Kareemah Hanifa during the Producing Your Story training (*Represent Justice*)
- 6 Alumni Ambassador Donna Hylton photographed at a get-out-the-vote event (*Drew London*)
- 6 CEO Daniel Forkkio filming content for the Represent Justice sizzle reel (*Represent Justice*)
- 6 George Anthony Morton presenting a clip from *Master of Light* at the Save the Tanner House Fundraiser, hosted at the Philadelphia Academy of the Fine Arts (*Christian Hayden*)
- 8 Alumni Ambassador Donna Hylton photographed at a get-out-the-vote event (*Drew London*)
- 9 Film participant George Anthony Morton speaking on a panel at DOC NYC (*DOC NYC*)
- 12 CEO Daniel Forkkio speaking at the 2022 Ambassador Graduation Ceremony (*Nathalie Gordon*)
- 13 Alumni Ambassador Donna Hylton with colleagues helping register voters (*Drew London*)
- 14 CEO Daniel Forkkio speaking during the 2023 California Youth Justice Braintrust (*Represent Justice*)

- 15 Film participant George Anthony Morton speaking on a panel at DOC NYC (*DOC NYC*)
- 17 2022 Ambassadors during their Graduation Ceremony celebration (*Nathalie Gordon*)
- 18 Justice For LaKeith Smith Community Event (*BGrace Media*)
- 19 Justice For LaKeith Smith Community Event (*BGrace Media*)
- 20 2023 Ambassadors at the annual program retreat in Los Angeles, CA (*Ricky Horne Jr.*)
- 21 Panelists discuss *Master of Light* after a screening at the Newark Museum of Art, hosted by Newark Councilman Dupré Kelly (*Office of Newark Councilman Dupré Kelly*)
- 22 Participant at the 2023 Youth Justice Braintrust in Los Angeles, CA (*Represent Justice*)
- 23 Alumni Ambassador Donna Hylton with colleagues helping register voters (*Drew London*)
- 24 Alumni Ambassador Shannon Ross during the Producing Your Story Training (*Nathalie Gordon*)
- 25 Alumni Ambassador Kent Mendoza during the Producing Your Story Training (*Nathalie Gordon*)
- 27 The post-film panel after a screening of *Sansón and Me* hosted by San Francisco State University's School of Cinema (*Annie Pancak*)
- 27 At the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, George Anthony Morton chats with Associate Director of Public Programs and Exhibitions Novella Ford at an in-gallery conversation (*Gina Murrell*)
- 28 A private screening of *Sansón & Me* at Camp Grace (*The Place4Grace*)
- 29 Fernando Bermudez for #FreeOurVote by Represent Justice (*Roderick Gladney*)
- 29 Production training with trainers Dominic Zappalla, Saladin White II, Ambassadors John Pace, Armand Coleman, Eddie Ellis, and trainer Taj DeVore-Bey at Lightbulb Rentals, Philadelphia (*Represent Justice*)
- 29 Ambassadors John Pace and Armand Coleman at Production training, Lightbulb Rentals, Philadelphia (*Represent Justice*)
- 30 *On These Grounds* screening and panel at Free State Festival in Lawrence, Kansas (*Ariana Garfinkel*)
- 30 2021 Alumni Ambassador April Grayson during filming of the Represent Justice sizzle reel (*Represent Justice*)
- 32 CEO Daniel Forkkio speaking at the 2022 Ambassador Graduation Ceremony (*Nathalie Gordon*)
- 32 Production Training with Ambassadors Jessie Mabrey, Kareemah Hanifah, trainer Jasmín Mara Lopez, and Ambassador Tabatha Trammell at Industrious, Atlanta (*Represent Justice*)
- 33 CEO Daniel Forkkio filming content for the Represent Justice sizzle reel (*Represent Justice*)
- 34 Production Training with trainer Jasmín Mara Lopez, and Ambassadors Tabatha Trammell and Jessie Mabrey at Industrious, Atlanta (*Represent Justice*)
- 35 Alumni Ambassador Waleisah Wilson during the Producing Your Story Training (*Nathalie Gordon*)
- 35 Public Defender Brendon Woods, Activist Susan Bustamente, and Director Rodrigo Reyes who spoke on a panel after a screening of *Sansón and Me* at the New Parkway Theater hosted by Berkeley FILM Foundation (*Rodrigo Reyes*)
- 35 A screening of *Sansón & Me* at UCLA (*Represent Justice*)
- 37 Dr. Alisha Hines presenting youth justice data findings at the 2023 Braintrust (*Represent Justice*)
- 37 A screening of *Sansón & Me* at UC Berkeley (*Buddy Terry*)
- 38 Ambassador Manager Montse Reyes speaking at the UC Berkeley screening of *Sansón & Me* (*Buddy Terry*)
- 39 2021 Alumni Ambassadors during filming of the Represent Justice sizzle reel (*Represent Justice*)
- 39 A screening of *Sansón & Me* at UC Berkeley (*Buddy Terry*)
- 40 RJ hosted a Reimagine Atlanta event in 2022 focused on closing the Atlanta City Detention Center (*Queen Norris*)
- 43 Alumni Ambassador Donna Hylton with colleagues helping register voters (*Drew London*)

# REPRESENT JUSTICE

## Strategic Plan

[representjustice.org](https://representjustice.org)

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### Appreciation/Acknowledgements

The dedicated Staff and Board of Represent Justice would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to the community for its success and growth since 2020. The multitude of filmmakers, impacted storytellers, community partners, elected officials, practitioners, advocates, and online supporters who have shared and engaged with the stories have helped ignite and continue conversations across the country.