Imagining America at the University of Northern Iowa
Proposal for Partnerships and Structuring
History of Imagining America
(Origins and evolution)

Imagining America was launched at a 1999 White House Conference initiated by the White House Millennium Council, the University of Michigan, and the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation. The name Imagining America reflected the theme of the White House Millennium Council that focused on renewing participation in all walks of U.S. life: "Honor the Past – Imagine the Future."

https://imaginingamerica.org/about/
We Believe...

Imagining America is committed to bringing people together as our full selves in critical yet hopeful spaces to imagine better ways of living, learning and working together. To do this work, we believe:

It is important to struggle with the idea of ‘America’.

Creative culture is an important site of liberation.

Organized ideas matter in the project of personal, institutional, and societal transformation.

Nothing is completely new.

Our work must be radically inclusive.

How we learn and work with one another matters.

Living up to our values requires institutional and societal change.

https://imaginingamerica.org/about/
We Envision...

We envision a world of expansive social imagination, constructed by multiple ways of knowing, where people work together to nurture healthy, vibrant, and joyful communities.

MISSION

The Imagining America consortium (IA) brings together scholars, artists, designers, humanists, and organizers to imagine, study, and enact a more just and liberatory ‘America’ and world. Working across institutional, disciplinary, and community divides, IA strengthens and promotes public scholarship, cultural organizing, and campus change that inspires collective imagination, knowledge-making, and civic action on pressing public issues.

By dreaming and building together in public, IA creates the conditions to shift culture and transform inequitable institutional and societal structures.

https://imaginingamerica.org/who-we-are/we-envision/
Without leaps of imagination or dreaming, we lose the excitement of possibilities. Dreaming, after all is a form of planning.

Imagination does not become great until human beings, given the courage and the strength, use it to create.

I am enough of an artist to draw freely upon my imagination. Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited.

Imagination encircles the world.

Beware the shrinking imagination.

Albert Einstein

Timothy K. Eatman
How IA at UNI aligns with the Academic Master Plan and UNI’s Strategic Plan

Foster an engaged and integrative learning environment

Advance student engagement and success

Value faculty and staff excellence

Elevate diversity, sustainability, and community engagement
UNI is an Institutional Member!

Imagining America (IA) is comprised of institutional members including public universities, private universities, 4-year liberal arts colleges, community colleges, cultural organizations, and schools of art and design. IA members strengthen the public roles of arts, humanities, and design fields through regional, national, and global research and action.
IA Member Benefits

Annual Conference

Publicly Active Graduate Education Fellows Program (PAGE)

Joy of Giving Something (JGS)

Research Initiatives

Regional Networking and Campus Community Organizing

PUBLIC: A Journal of Imagining America

National Spotlight (set to feature UNI soon)

Presidents’ Council
Proposed and Active Partnerships
In the Campus Community

Office of the Provost
Office of Community Engagement
Iowa Campus Compact
Additional Campus Partners

STEM Office

Aldo Leopold Distinguished Lecture Series/Faculty Advisory Board for Sustainability

North American Review

American Democracy Project

Student Groups doing related work

Center for Multicultural Education

Center for Educational Transformation

And many others....
Partnership Possibilities
In the Community

- Waterloo Human Rights Commission
- Cedar Falls Human Rights Commission
- Waterloo and Cedar Falls Mayoral Offices
- Cedar Valley Economic Inclusion
- Grow Cedar Valley
- Cedar Valley Arts Initiative
- Cedar Valley Nonprofit Association
- Regents Center for Early Developmental Education
- Cedar Falls CAPS
- Mag Pie Digital Magazine and other local media sources
A BIG IDEA...

We would like for UNI and community partners to choose a social issue that needs to be addressed in the Cedar Valley that every entity across campus can work on in ways that are relevant and appropriate for that program/organization/department/center/institute/etc. This work should be multiple years in duration, with an ambitious goal that is quantifiable and would truly improve lives in our community. This “project” would not only bring UNI’s resources to bear in improving the Cedar Valley, but it would transform and strengthen UNI in the process.
Big Idea Possibilities

Racial Divides

Childhood Poverty

Early Childhood Development (ACE’s)

Economic Disparity and Social Justice

Mental Health
Hosting Community Dialogue: Imagining the Cedar Valley

Let's start with a conversation.