

A Declaration of American Ideals

Today, as everyday Americans representing all of our nation's 435 congressional districts, we stand with countless other Americans who over the last 250 years passed on America's continuing efforts to more fully define and enact our nation's founding ideals of freedom, equality, and self-governance. ¹

We freely acknowledge differences of opinion on many things, some of them significant. Yet, despite those differences, our discussion and consideration of what others had to say led us to discover that we remain united in support of these founding ideals. ²

¹ When the Napolitan Institute asked respondents if they would like to participate in this historic conversation, we included an explanation which articulated the objectives and expectations of our project. See language from the official Recruiting Introduction for Participation:

"250 years ago, a conversation gave birth to a nation. Today, we're inviting you to continue that conversation in a new way. The Napolitan Institute, a non-profit organization founded to amplify the voices of the American people, is looking for individuals from across America to join a series of nation-wide conversations on what it really means to be an American today."

Communication from Final Confirmation of Participation

"In the first round, we will ask you six questions about freedom and equality in America. In the second, you'll have the opportunity to view, interact with, and contribute opinions on the viewpoints of over 2,000 other participants representing every congressional district across the US. The third round will bring together AI-generated insights from round one and two, including yours and other participants' opinions for you to respond to. "

² After the final phase in We The People, the Napolitan Institute asked a series of questions to quantify the success of the project from our respondent's perspective.

In that questioning, we found that 77% of respondents reported gaining a better understanding of different viewpoints, even if they disagree with them. Seventy-four percent (74%) of respondents found more common ground than they were expecting with other Americans through the conversations.

Therefore, as our part in the nation's continuing conversation about freedom and equality, we hereby declare that 21st century Americans embrace the following ideals.³

We have been endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Our nation was conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

In today's language, we understand that to mean **All men and women are created equal.**

We should be judged by the content of our character, not by the color of our skin.

We further declare our understanding of these ideals at this point in our nation's history:

People are born with basic rights that the government does not give them and cannot take away.

Freedom is the power to make your own choices and control your own life.

Freedom is the right to express your thoughts and beliefs without fear of punishment.

Freedom is being able to live your life feeling safe from harm and persecution.

Equality is recognizing that all people have the same basic worth and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

³ An important part of the We the People process was complete transparency with participants and thorough explanation of the outcomes of the project. (continued on page 2)

From our Instructions Given to Respondents on Voting for the Declaration of American Ideals:

"At the end of We The People, our goal is to draft a declaration of American ideals for the 21st century. Below, you will see a subset of the statements you rated in Task 1 – these are statements containing ideals for freedom and equality, including the four historical ideals. (continued on page 2)

Your task: Imagine that you are drafting a declaration of American ideals for the 21st century. Which of the following ideals would you include in that declaration? For each statement, choose whether to 'Include' or 'Do not include'.

Note that this is different from simply rating whether you agree or disagree with a particular statement as an individual – rather, consider ideals which you feel the nation as a whole should seek to achieve."

Equality is everyone having the same opportunity to succeed based on their own efforts, not a guarantee of the same results.

Equality also means that **The law should apply to everyone in the same way, no matter who they are.**

Having found common ground in support of these ideals, the task before twenty-first century Americans is the same as those who came before us— we must pass these blessings on to future generations by helping our nation move ever closer to living out these noble ideals. If we do that, we will have done our part to ensure that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth.⁴

⁴ Though not voted on for inclusion for ideals, Respondents did vote overwhelmingly in agreement on the notion that the continued passing down of and striving for America's founding ideals must be done.

(<https://freedom.wethepeople-250.org/>)

"Good values start at home, where parents have the first and most important job of teaching children respect and kindness." 97% Approval

"Passing down values of fairness and respect to the next generation is essential for equality." 93% Approval

"America's historical ideals are goals to work toward, challenging the nation to learn from past mistakes and build a better future."
85% Approval

"America's founding ideals provide a moral compass to guide the nation and its people."
75% Approval