



2730 Eagles Eye Ave, NW
Salem, OR 97304
www.democracylab.org

Dear NSF POSE Review Committee,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for PolicyEngine's proposal to establish an Open Source Ecosystem (OSE) for their economic policy analysis platform. As the Founding Executive Director of DemocracyLab, I have had the pleasure of witnessing PolicyEngine's growth and impact through our platform, which connects skilled volunteers with tech-for-good projects.

PolicyEngine has been one of the most active and successful projects on the DemocracyLab platform. Their engagement with our community exemplifies the power of open collaboration in addressing critical societal challenges:

1. Hundreds of DemocracyLab users have applied to volunteer with PolicyEngine, demonstrating the strong interest in their mission.
2. PolicyEngine has successfully worked with dozens of these volunteers, leveraging diverse skills to enhance their platform.
3. In a testament to the quality of talent and meaningful engagement, PolicyEngine has hired a full-time employee from our volunteer pool.

As PolicyEngine plans its transition to an OSE, DemocracyLab is committed to deepening our collaboration. We propose the following ways to support PolicyEngine's scoping grant:

1. Ecosystem Discovery Support:
 - Leverage our network to distribute surveys and recruit focus group participants from the tech-for-good community.
 - Host virtual roundtable discussions with diverse stakeholders from our community to provide insights on OSE development.
2. Community Building:
 - Organize targeted hackathons or sprints focused on specific aspects of PolicyEngine's development.
 - Facilitate connections between PolicyEngine and other complementary projects on our platform to explore potential collaborations.
3. Governance Model Insights:

- Share our experiences and best practices in managing an open, collaborative platform.
- Provide feedback on proposed governance structures from the perspective of a mission-driven tech organization.

4. Volunteer Engagement Strategies:

- Collaborate on developing effective onboarding and retention strategies for OSE contributors.
- Explore ways to integrate PolicyEngine's OSE with DemocracyLab's platform for sustained volunteer engagement.

5. Impact Measurement:

- Share our methodologies for tracking and quantifying the impact of volunteer contributions.
- Collaborate on developing metrics specific to policy analysis and economic modeling OSEs.

DemocracyLab's mission to empower people who use technology to advance the public good aligns perfectly with PolicyEngine's goals. We believe that the development of an OSE for PolicyEngine has the potential to significantly advance the field of economic policy analysis while embodying our shared values of community-building, inclusivity, collaboration, transparency, innovation, and embracing challenges.

We are excited to be an active participant in shaping PolicyEngine's evolution into a robust OSE. By combining PolicyEngine's expertise in economic modeling with DemocracyLab's experience in facilitating tech-for-good collaborations, we can create a powerful ecosystem that serves researchers, policymakers, developers, and ultimately, the public good.

Sincerely,



Mark Frischmuth

Founding Executive Director

DemocracyLab